



Discourses and Practices of the Regionalisation of Foreign and Security

Policies: The Cases of West Africa and South America

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Declaration

This thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

The process of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies, its conditions of emergence and evolution, is the core object of study of this doctoral thesis. This research has two aims, first it seeks to construct a new framework to understand and conceptualise regionalisation processes and second, applying this framework to draw conclusions on the paths these processes take in West Africa and South America.

In this research I take issue with the way in which IR approaches present regional projects as the ‘natural’ or ‘rational’ response of nation states to a combination of objective and ideational factors. A more thorough explanation requires an account of the ways in which these factors are themselves constituted, maintained and shaped by discourses and power relations between the relevant actors, as well as through the concrete practices the actors deploy. I thus conceptualise regionalisation as an interplay between discourses and practices of actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the region. Methodologically, the analysis uses a poststructuralist discourse analysis and an interpretative process tracing that relies mainly on ethnographic work.

The key empirical findings of this thesis are twofold. First, historically constituted discourses are crucial in determining the form and extent of the regionalisation process – in particular the key articulations linking the concepts of state/nation and region. Second, the comparison allowed me to demonstrate that regions are not independent units: they are part of an international system where actors (re)produce discourses carrying certain norms, concepts and meanings such as ‘security’, ‘development’, ‘regional integration’, etc. It is precisely the encounter between the regional and ‘external’ actors discourses which constitutes the process of regionalisation. The meaning given to security, in particular, which emerges at the intersection of these discourses, decisively frames the process towards either cooperation between sovereign states or the building of a regional political community.

Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
AQIM	Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
AU	African Union
CCCP	Centro de Coordenação de Capacitação Policial do Mercosul (Centre for the Coordination of Police Training)
CDS	Conselho de Defesa Sul-Americano (South American Defence Council)
CEAO	Communauté des Etats d’Afrique de l’Ouest (Community of West African States)
CELAC	Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States)
CENI	Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante (Independent National Electoral Commission)
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
CIT	Classical Integration Theory
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy

COMPERSEG	Comité Permanente de Seguridad (Permanent Security Committee)
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
CPC	Comité Parlamentario Conjunto (Joint Parliamentary Committee)
CS	Copenhagen School
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CSN	Comunidade Sul-americana de Nações (South American Community of Nations)
DCA	Defence Cooperation Agreement
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DoD	Department of Defence
EEAS	European External Action Service
EC	European Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOMIB	ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
EPP	Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo (Paraguayan People's Army)
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force

EU	European Union
FARC-EP	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTE	Grupo de Trabalho Especializado (Specialised Working Group)
GTP	Grupo de Trabalho Permanente (Permanent Working Group)
IfS	Instrument for Stability
IGAD	the Intergovernmental Authority on Development
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organisation
IR	International Relations
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
Mercosur	Mercado Comum do Sul (Common Market of the South)
MINUSMA	Mission Multidimensionnelle Intégrée des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation au Mali (Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali)
MINUSTAH	Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation de Haïti (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti)
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRA	New Regionalism Approach

OAS	Organisation of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MISSANG	Missão Militar Angolana Na Guiné-Bissau (Angolan Military Mission in Guinea-Bissau)
PAPS	Political Affairs Peace and Security
Parlasur	Parlamento do Mercosul (Parliament of Mercosur)
PCASED	Program for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development in Africa
RED	Reunião Especializada de Autoridades de Aplicação em Matéria de Drogas, Prevenção do Uso Indevido e Reabilitação& de Dependentes de Drogas do Mercosul (Specialised Reunion of the Responsible Authorities in the Field of Drugs, Prevention of its illegal Use and Rehabilitation of Drug Addiction in the Mercosur)
RIP	Regional Indicative Programme
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RBA	Region-Building Approach
REC	Regional Economic Community
RSC	Regional Security Complex
RSCT	Regional Security Complex Theory
RMI	Reunião de Ministros do Interior (Conference of the Home Ministers of the Mercosur)
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons

SISME	Sistema de Intercambio de Informações de Segurança do Mercosul (Mercosur Security Data Network)
SC	Security Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SS	Sociological School
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UK	United Kingdom
Unasur	União das Nações Sul-Americanas (Union of South American States)
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USSOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
WAPPCO	West African Police Chiefs Committee
WAPIS	West African Police Information System

Introduction

Regionalisation: a ‘rational’ and necessary process?

Regional political projects whether defined as regional integration projects, regionalism, regional security complexes or security communities have been extensively studied by the International Relations (IR) literature following the proliferation of regional organisations in the aftermath of the European integration experience¹ after the Second World War. This landmark regional project was emulated across the world with, for example, the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) and the Andean Community in Latin America, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Africa, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Asia, and many others. These organisations have been characterised in the last decades by their increased political and security role beyond their initial ambitions to establish free trade areas, or common markets, or deeper economic integration systems. This relatively recent qualitative shift, leading to the development of multidimensional regional projects with a growing impact on international relations, has already been highlighted by the New Regionalism Approach (NRA) (Fawcett and Hurrell 1995; Farrell, Hettne and Van Langenhove 2005).

These regional projects are nowadays part of our international landscape and considered an appropriate response to a range of problems posed, among other things, by globalisation. Illustratively, the IR literature explains their emergence as the ‘rational’ answer of states facing cross-border issues at the regional and global level.

¹ Even though other regional organisations were created before the European Economic Community (1957) such as the Arab League (1945) or the Organisation of American States (OAS) (1948). However, they did not have either the same supranational ambition or the same impact on their member states than the EU.

This straightforward explanation is not only shared by most of the IR literature but also by an international community discourse² on regional integration triggered by the EU's experience and activism to export its institutional and normative model. This 'regional integration' discourse depicts regional integration as the best solution in order to achieve peace and prosperity; or, in other words, as the answer to a multitude of problems (economic, security, environmental, social, etc.) that cannot be efficiently addressed at the national level inasmuch as they travel unimpeded across borders and extend their effects throughout a group of geographically connected countries. At the same time, neither can they be addressed at the scale of the global level through multilateral organisations to the extent that these organisations include many states that are not always impacted (or to the same degree) by the same issues and therefore have fewer interests in resolving them.³ This discourse is connected to a 'globalisation and interdependence' discourse asserting that, in the contemporary world, states are becoming increasingly interdependent in a number of domains such as trade, the environment and security. This discourse is (re)produced and diffused by key actors of the international community, such as the United Nations (UN) and its agencies, and influential international actors in the field of security and/or development, such as the United States (US), Japan, the United Kingdom (UK) and France.⁴ It is, for instance, well illustrated by the French White Book on Defence (2008, 19):

² The term 'international community discourses' can be controversial. In this research it designates the dominant discourses that structure international relations: the norms, concepts and conventions that frame the policies and behaviour of states and non-state actors. For example, IR poststructuralists often present the sovereignty principle as a structuring organisational principle of the international community; assimilated to a historically constituted discourse delineating the boundaries between a peaceful 'inside' and an anarchic 'outside' (Campbell 1992; Walker 1993).

³ Supported by the idea that because they are geographically connected, these countries share similar historical experiences and present cultural similarities; they can thus forge a common future built on shared interests and identity.

⁴ These actors are central to the extent they still have, at the moment, the most influence in defining the norms, concepts and conventions of international community discourses.

‘Globalisation is a new situation in which the spread of information and knowledge, the transformation of trade and changing inter-national power relationships have an immediate global impact. It is creating a general, uncontrolled interaction and interdependence between all States.’

Accordingly, states need to cooperate to address issues stemming from these different policy areas that are becoming increasingly transnational. Paired with this representation of interdependence, the ‘regional integration’ discourse presents regionalisation as a ‘rational’ or ‘natural’ solution to this dilemma.

These discourses are particularly prominent in the area of regionalisation that I am investigating in this research: foreign and security policies. Firstly, the ‘regional integration’ discourse explicitly claims that today most states cannot exert influence on the international stage – for instance in multilateral negotiations – without belonging to a coalition of countries. The ‘natural’ coalition of countries includes neighbouring states sharing the same interests and issues, and connected by a common destiny which would facilitate the ability to speak with ‘one voice’ internationally. Secondly, this discourse sets forth that, while globalisation and interdependence bring positive changes, they also open channels and facilitate the circulation across national borders of organised crime and the illegal trafficking of various items (drugs, weapons, cigarettes, humans, etc.). It enables the spilling over of conflicts and, among other things, the activities and growth of transnational networks of terrorist groups. The UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004) highlight that ‘Today, more than ever before, threats are interrelated and a threat to one is a threat to all. The mutual vulnerability of weak and strong has never been clearer.’ This security interdependence is also emphasised in the European Security Strategy (2003): ‘The Post Cold War is one of increasingly open borders in

which the internal and external aspects are indissolubly linked (...). These developments (...) have increased European dependence – and so vulnerability.’

A dominant discourse in the international community thus presents the regional level as the appropriate one to handle this increasing security interdependence – thereby connecting regional integration to security. Regional cooperation, in this domain, is presented as necessary and, even sometimes, as a matter of survival because of the transnational nature of the ‘new threats.’⁵ The European Security Strategy (2003) clearly states that: ‘Coherent policies are also needed regionally, especially in dealing with conflict. Problems are rarely solved on a single country basis, or without regional support (...).’ This discourse is also shared and (re)produced by the IR literature on regions and security that presents this link between region and security as straightforward. The literature on Regional Security Complexes (RSC) (Lake and Morgan 1997; Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998; Buzan and Waever 2003) and the literature on Security Communities (SC) (Adler and Barnett 1998) are good examples of this academic discourse. Doing so, they take these assumptions of the international community discourses for granted in their analysis, instead of considering them an element of the empirical research.

Empirically, the foreign and security policies practices of states are changing in many regions. An increase in consultation, cooperation, coordination, exchanges of officials, etc., can be observed between the diplomatic corps and armed forces of the states in many regions. Regional institutions are set up, joint military training and exercises, regional interventions and peace operations are launched, and states seek to define common positions in multilateral negotiations. While the emergence of these practices is evident across the world, the form and extent of their regionalisation

⁵ The so-called ‘new threats’ are also an element of this international community discourse. They include drug trafficking, organised crime, terrorism, human trafficking, smuggling and so on.

process varies according to each region from highly institutionalised practices of regionalisation to weak regional dialogue.

For instance, the EU, considered the most advanced example, has developed, on the one hand, an intergovernmental Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)/Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP); and, on the other hand, supranational common trade and development policies.⁶ Recently, directed by the newly adopted Treaty of Lisbon, the creation of a European External Action Service (EEAS) led by a High Representative is supposed to provide leadership and coordination to EU external action as a whole. Another model is the intergovernmental consultation and cooperation on political and security issues of South American states in the Union of South American States (Unasur). As for ECOWAS, the organisation is implementing a peace and security architecture including binding conventions, regional norms and joint interventions to deal with security issues. In Asia, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is a consultative forum designed to foster consultation and cooperation on political and security issues between the member states without any kind of formal commitment.

These are only a few examples among many others that illustrate the diversity of regionalisation processes across the world. This variety and, in many cases, the limits of the regionalisation process in the area of foreign and security policies, in spite of the prevalence of international community discourses in favour of regionalisation, raise some questions that this doctoral thesis seeks to answer. Indeed, what are the reasons behind this differentiation in an international context where regional integration is presented as the 'rational' and necessary choice to deal with the consequences of globalisation including vital security problems? Hence, taking a step

⁶ However, whereas the trade policy is an exclusive competence of the EU, development cooperation is a shared competence which enables member states to maintain their own independent development policy next to the EU's.

back is needed to analyse these international community discourses and understand how they interact with regional actors to produce the concrete regionalisation process that we observe. Instead, of assuming the ‘rationality’ and ‘necessity’ of regionalisation, a deconstruction of these interactions, and an analysis of these assumptions, is needed if we wish to better account for concrete and diverse paths that regionalisation processes take.

How can we understand the regionalisation of foreign and security policies?

The aim of this research is twofold. It aims, on the one hand, to understand the conditions of emergence and evolution of the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies through the analysis of two case studies, West Africa and South America. On the other hand, to do so, it seeks to elaborate a theoretical and methodological framework providing an alternative to mainstream IR approaches on regional projects. A new theoretical and methodological framework is needed because the academic literature is itself part of the process of regionalisation, together with these international discourses that it (re)produces. They are carriers of a particular political project for the regions and thus some ‘denaturalisation’ is needed in order to understand their effects on the processes of regionalisation in interaction with regional and other ‘external’ actors; this requires an alternative theoretical framework from those the IR approaches themselves invoke.

Regionalisation is understood in this research as situated at the intersection of the discourses and practices of regional and ‘external’ actors. It should be analysed as the result of the interplay between three types of element:

1. The discourses of the member states of the regional organisation on the region and security: these discourses are historically rooted and draw on their interpretation of their construction as states, of their development project and its link with their

representation of the region where they are located. Discourse is understood in the poststructuralist sense of a structure of meaning, performative of objects, subjects and of our experience; it organises our knowledge, as well as the norms and conventions constituting society (Shapiro 1981, 20; Hansen 2006, 17-18). By providing the conditions for human understanding and action, it constitutes the representations of the politicians and officials of the states and thus conditions the states' policy towards the regionalisation process. The analysis of this element leads to some key questions that will be answered through the empirical research such as: what types of discourses and representations are the most favourable to regionalisation? Which are the main articulations of concepts within the discourses that foster or hinder the process? Does the comparison across regions show similar elements in the discourses that constitute the regionalisation process?

2. 'External' discourses such as the international community discourses on 'regional integration' and 'regions and security' (re)produced and diffused by international actors such as the EU, the US or the Organisation of American States (OAS) which will be thoroughly analysed in this doctoral thesis. I argue that these 'discursive encounters,' as coined by Doty (1996), between regional and 'external' actors constitute the regionalisation process, its form and extent. These 'external' actors construct their own understanding of 'reality' through their discourses and construct as well the solution to address this 'reality'; in this case regionalisation. 'External' discourses also include academic discourses. Indeed, the academic literature can be used as a point of reference by officials to justify their policies, or can implicitly constitute their discourse without their awareness. The empirical analysis thus aims to examine the result of this 'encounter' on the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America: how and in which ways do these actors

struggle to impose their political project for the region? How and in which conditions do ‘external’ actors successfully (or not) constitute the field of possibilities of the regionalisation processes through their concepts and norms?

3/The practices of regional and ‘external’ actors which introduce some degree of contingency and agency to a more structural account of regionalisation: while discourses constitute the practices of the actors and thus restrict their field of possibilities, new situations also arise that can trigger an adaptation of the actors’ practices. To be legitimised, these new practices have to be recognised and framed as such by the dominant discourse – thereby possibly challenging or transforming it.

The interplay between these three types of elements is precisely what will be analysed in this thesis so as to unearth a number of empirical findings on the regionalisation of foreign and security policies in West Africa and South America; and to provide some more general insights on processes of regionalisation. It should be noted that the distinction between the regional actors’ discourses and the ‘external’ actors’ discourse is mainly a heuristic strategy enabling a separation helping to empirically shed light on the complexity of this process. However, these discourses are mutually constitutive and closely intertwined in their production of the regionalisation process; it is often difficult to determine where a particular element of the discourse originated. As such, the boundaries between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ of the regions are never really fixed. They are constantly (re)produced through the discursive and social practices of the actors.

Within this overall analytical framework, two narrower lines of argument will be investigated.

Firstly, the relation between the regionalisation of foreign and security policies and the construction of a regional political community: why do some regionalisation

processes indicate a shift towards a political community with supranational decision-making processes and the emergence of a normative regional order; whereas others are restricted to mere cooperation? The argument that will be explored in this research is that, on the one hand, the concept of regional integration (re)produced by the discourses of the actors of the international community carries a particular meaning linked to the expectation of community building, pooling of sovereignty and elaboration of common policies. Cooperation between states that are not seen as belonging to the same region – even in the domains of foreign and security policies – do not convey this kind of meaning. The idea of the ‘region’ seems to add a quality element to the cooperation between states, as well as higher expectations of further integration. Accordingly, it can raise some tension if these expectations are understood, by some actors, as threatening to the sovereignty and identity of the concerned states. I will examine how the EU’s experience and its activism in promoting its regional integration model contributes to the regionalisation process in other regions of the world; a question that has already been taken as an object of study by various literatures on the EU’s normative power (See Manners 2002; Lucarelli and Manners 2006) and on interregionalism (Söderbaum and Van Langenhove 2005; Baert, Scaramagli and Söderbaum 2014). Further, I also contend that, beyond its activism, the EU’s experience – through the meaning it infused to regional integration – is taken explicitly or implicitly as the defining standard for regional integration; it thus plays the role of a model or anti-model to which all other regional projects refer to.

Keeping this meaning of regional integration in mind, I also argue, on the other hand, that the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America depends on how the member states of the regional organisations articulate in their discourse the

concepts of 'state' and 'nation' on one side, and the concept of 'region', 'regional integration' or 'regional community' on the other side. According to Waever (2002, 38-40), regional integration projects are framed by their member states' articulation of these concepts that have to be made consistent in the discursive practices of the politicians and officials to justify and legitimise the regional project. His argument, which appears relevant for this analysis, will be thoroughly examined in the cases of South America and West Africa while noting that, in these regional cases, the concept of region also has this EU infused meaning highlighted above that can make the articulation more difficult. Obviously, these two concepts are not the only ones articulated within the actors' discourses on regions and security: other concepts such as 'security', 'development', 'sovereignty', 'autonomy' are reiterated in these discourses. The ways they are linked to the key state/region articulation is precisely one of the main objects of analysis of this research to clarify how they condition the path taken by the regionalisation process in the two regions studied. The comparison will seek to understand if some articulations justify a shift towards a regional community while others restrict it to mere cooperation.

This link between regionalisation and the building of a regional political community is crucial in the particular domain of foreign and security policies: by addressing together what is foreign to the region or endangering it, the regional organisations are constructing a regional identity justifying the regional policy. This argument is shared by both the IR literature on regions, such as the Regional Security Complex (RSC) and the Security Community (SC) approaches; and by the IR poststructuralist literature which claims, in the case of the state, that foreign and security policies are central as they directly separate who is 'inside' from who is 'outside,' thereby (re)producing the identity of the state (Campbell 1992; Walker

1993). This claim can easily be translated in the case of the region: the policies elaborated against the 'others' enable the construction of a regional identity. It thus provides the basis and legitimation for the elaboration of a regional normative order providing the guidance for action, and the attribution of an agency to the regional organisation to drive this process. However, for this reason, the process can also be understood as threatening for the state's sovereignty and identity. This claim will be examined in the cases of South America and West Africa: to which extent does the process of 'othering' or collective securitisation⁷ highlighted in these literatures explain this shift towards a regional community?

Secondly, I argue that the regionalisation of foreign and security policies is constituted by the discursive and social practices of regional actors trying to impose their own meaning and political project for the region. This struggle is mainly situated at two levels:

1/Within the member states of the regional organisations: in each state the key concepts highlighted above are articulated in various ways to justify policies promoting or hindering regionalisation. These discourses are (re)produced by politicians, diplomatic officials, military officers, representatives from the senate or the house of representatives and so on. The empirical research will thus aim to identify the dominant discourse that constitutes the policy of the state towards regionalisation; while analysing its tensions and the contesting discourse(s) (when they exist) to examine the possibility of change. Indeed, actors 'inside' and 'outside' the state can draw on these tensions to destabilise and challenge the dominant discourse.

⁷ This concept of collective securitisation is put forward in the RSC literature to coin the process of collectively constructing an issue as a security threat (Buzan and Waever 2003, 57).

2/Between the member states to constitute the regional official discourse (re)produced by the regional institutions: each member state seeks to promote its own understanding of the region and its political project to frame regional policies according to its own constructed identity and interests. The acknowledgment of this struggle and the power relation it entails between the member states provides an incentive to give particular attention to the states constituted as ‘regional powers’ or ‘regional leaders’ through these interactions. An argument already put forward by Waeber (2002, 39) who argues that special attention should be given to the major states which are central in the process of regional integration. The empirical analysis will thus seek to analyse how and to which extent these states constitute the regionalisation process.

Region, regionalism, regional integration, region-building, etc.?

Before further exploring the rationale driving the elaboration of the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis, some terms concerning regionalisation should be clarified. Each IR literature on regions has developed its own terminology to describe regional projects or processes: regional integration, regionalism, regionalisation, security community, regional security complex, regional security governance, region-building, etc. It is thus important to explain why the concept of regionalisation was chosen as the object of study of this research and how the other concepts are employed in the analysis. I will also specify in which ways the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies differs from a military alliance or security cooperation in general.

Starting with this last point, the most obvious difference with security cooperation is the spatial scope of regionalisation that has a geographical dimension (Fawn 2009, 16); whereas security cooperation, in principle, is often not framed by geographical

constraints such as in the case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or the US-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. Moreover, by contrast, the process of regionalisation is always connected to some extent to the idea of a regional community and identity. As mentioned, its meaning in the international community discourse is qualitatively different from the discourse on security cooperation, or from a security alliance traditionally associated with power or threat balancing. The concept of 'region' raises more expectations as well as more concerns than mere cooperation between states.

More generally, my understanding of region refers to socially constructed entities and historically contingent processes as conceptualised by the Region-Building Approach (RBA) and clearly stated in this way by MacLeod (2001, 670): 'regions are historically constructed, culturally contested, and politically charged rather than existentially given and neutral.' On the one hand, the concept of regionalisation – taken outside of the New Regionalism Approach where it usually takes the place of the dependent variable – reflects the dynamic and fluctuating nature of the process: continuously on going and with no determined end-point, or specific stages through which it has to go through. By identifying an end-point – whether a 'tightly-coupled security community' or a supranational political community –, concepts such as 'security community' or 'regional integration' provide a deterministic and formal explanation which focuses on the objective factors that are supposed to cause this end-point (See, for instance, Haas 1958; Adler and Barnett 1998). The historicity and contingency of this process are thus ignored. However, these terms will also be used in this research: 'regional integration' either as the actual aim (a supranational community) of certain actors, or as a term used by officials to speak about their regional organisation or about the EU; and 'security

community’ as an academic concept that entered the actors’ discourse to justify their political project for the region. On the other hand, while this project draws on the RBA’s conceptualisation of region, it also tries to highlight the constraining dimension of discourse which is to a large extent ignored by critical geographers who extensively focus on the agency of regional actors in the building of regions. The term of ‘region-building’ illustrates well this bias as it refers to the purposive action of building; it was therefore avoided as the object of study of this research.

The limits of the IR literature on regional projects

As mentioned previously, this thesis aims at making a general contribution to the literature on regions and security through both the elaboration of a theoretical and methodological framework, and the insights drawn from the empirical analysis. Its starting point is a criticism of the various IR literatures on political regional projects which share a similar limitation: they seek to provide an explanation of the regionalisation process through the identification of a set of material and ideational factors that are supposed to cause its emergence, its successful evolution or failure – and, if possible, draw generalisations from the comparison across regions of empirical findings. Some of these literatures are also deterministic and/or teleological inasmuch as they describe a causal linear process with a (sometimes wished-for) end-point. These literatures fail to provide a comprehensive account of the complexity of this social phenomenon and of its empirical existence as will be shown in the literature review. Two main problems are emphasised. On the one hand, these approaches completely leave aside the representations of the actors: how they process and give meaning to the material and ideational factors that are analysed in the IR literature; a meaning that arises through complex historical processes and interaction. Outside of these representations, these factors cannot have any effect on regionalisation as is

assumed in the IR literature. On the other hand, there is no awareness that these regions are not independent units but are part of international discursive structures where regional integration, as mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, has a particular meaning (re)produced by international actors, which interact (converge, conflict or adapt) with regional actors' representations.

Theoretical framework: the discourses and practices of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies

The starting point of the theoretical framework of this dissertation is thus the concern that formal causal explanations provide weak understandings of the emergence and complex unfolding of regionalisation processes. Even though similar factors such as globalisation or organised criminality matter in the regional environment, they do not have a meaning and an effect on the policy of the actors outside of their representations. Indeed, the empirical presence of similar material and ideational factors will not guarantee the same outcome in terms of regionalisation. Their causal effects cannot therefore be traced which makes generalisations about regionalisation rather difficult. Hence, my aim is not to identify the relevant material and/or ideational factors causing the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies but to trace the discourses and practices of the actors constituting it. In other words, and as explained previously, the aim is to understand how the process of regionalisation finds itself at the intersections of three elements: 1/regional states' discourses; 2/'external' actors' discourses; 3/the practices of the actors.

Theoretically, the regionalisation of foreign and security policies is conceptualised in this thesis as resulting from the interplay between the discourses and practices of regional and 'external' actors. It draws on the poststructuralist claim that foreign policy and identity are co-constituted through discourse in a process of narrative

adjustment (Hansen 2006, xvii). However, the main weakness of IR poststructuralist analyses is their unique focus on discursive practices while ignoring social practices that are actually essential to this co-constitution.⁸ Indeed, a discourse carrying a certain understanding of the regional identity can legitimise the elaboration of a regional policy, and thus lead to the establishment of regional practices. These regional practices in the domains of foreign and security policies can take the form of consultations between politicians, diplomats or military officers, joint military industrial programs, regional peace operations or cooperation to monitor the border and so on. These social practices are crucial because they are the settings where the actors are socialised to this dominant discourse and thus (re)produce it and the regional identity it constructs. Actors can also adapt their practices to respond to new situations which then feedback into the discourse and can transform it because these practices have to be legitimised and supported by a coherent regional identity. Hence, while a poststructuralist approach to foreign policy is at the basis of my framework, it is expanded to include social practices in order to take into account this interplay between discourses and practices.

Methodology

The methodology used to empirically apply this theoretical framework is twofold. Firstly, I draw on Hansen's (2006) poststructuralist discourse analysis method to analyse the discourses produced by the regional institutions, the regional powers (contrasting it with other member states' positions), and 'external' actors. In the case of regional actors, I examine in each identified discourse how policies concerning the regionalisation of foreign and security policies are justified on the basis of a particular

⁸ These scholars make the ontological claim with which I agree that all practices are discursive. However, as a result they do not analyse non-text and speech-based practices. My strategy was therefore to heuristically separate text and speech-based practices (discursive) from other practices (social) in the empirical analysis.

understanding of the identity of the state and its articulation with the region. The aim is to uncover the key articulations, but also the tensions within the web of elements used in the dominant discourse and in the contesting one(s). The regional power' discourses are analysed within their historical context to understand how these particular articulations of elements emerged.

The 'discursive encounters' between regional and 'external' actors are also analysed to understand how and to which extent these 'external' actors' discourses constitute the regional official discourse.⁹ As mentioned these discourses stem, on the one hand, from the academic literature with concepts such as 'security community' or 'regional security complexes' that are becoming references in the 'real' world. On the other hand, they are discourses produced by international actors or other international and regional organisations with which South American and West African states maintain political, security, economic, or development relations. These actors actively promote their own norms and concepts in these 'discursive encounters'. However, they can also, without actively trying, be taken as a reference point (positive or negative) by regional actors following the historical relations they maintain or their normative appeal. Hence, the ambition is to understand how and through which processes regional discourses assimilate, adapt, reject or construct themselves in reference to these 'external' actors' discourses.

Secondly, two case studies are chosen in order to analyse the interplay between discourses and practices. The two case studies focus on regional interventions (whether political, civilian or military), and on regional policies to manage transnational security issues. The aim here is to trace how the dominant (and sometimes the contesting) discourses constitute social practices; how these discourses

⁹ This does not mean that they are not mutually constitutive. Indeed, regional discourses also constitute the 'external' actors' discourse. However, it is beyond the object of study of this doctoral thesis, which focuses on the regionalisation processes of West Africa and South America.

and their understanding of the region and its identity are (re)produced by the actors participating to these practices. I will also look at the possible adaptation of these practices resulting from tensions within the discourse or from a reaction to new situations. The methodology used is an interpretative process-tracing going from the discourses to the practices and then from the practices back to the discourses to clarify how their interplay constitute the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

Case studies: West Africa and South America

I examine in this research two different regions: West Africa and South America. While not seeking to generalise, this comparison is essential to this research project. On the one hand, the comparison of the ‘factors’ of regionalisation put forward by the IR literature in the two regions shows the contradictions and the weak explanatory power of these frameworks. On the other hand, the comparison is also crucial to show how regions are not independent units but are embedded within international discourses. It highlights how regional actors articulate concepts infused with this international meaning and how the same ‘external’ actors try to frame their regionalisation processes but with different effect depending on the regional actors’ representations.

Moreover, it was important for the purpose of this research to choose two regions where the path taken by the regionalisation of foreign and security policies differs enough to be able to highlight the lack of explanatory power of the IR literature and propose a different understanding of this difference. The West African and South American regions, while presenting some similarities that enabled their comparison, such as the presence of a clear regional power (Nigeria, Brazil) and similar security and political issues; show as well contrasting regional strategies taken in the frame of

their regional organisations, ECOWAS, Mercosur and Unasur. Finally, this choice of regions also aims at filling a geographical gap in the Region-Building Approach. Indeed, most analyses on the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America are carried out by scholars using the New Regionalism Approach, the Security Community or the Regional Security Complex frameworks. By contrast, Region-Building analyses usually focus on the European Union, or on Nordic or Eastern Europe.

Structure of the doctoral thesis

The first chapter of this thesis starts by reviewing the IR literature on regional projects. It shows their main shortcomings: the deterministic dimension of these approaches through their exclusive focus on material and ideational factors; and their lack of awareness of how international community discourses constitute the regionalisation processes. It then presents the Region Building-Approach to highlight its strengths and its problems that will then be addressed in the second chapter. This first chapter finishes with a review of the IR literature on hegemony and regional leadership.

The second chapter develops the theoretical framework of this research project. It delineates a discourses and practices approach to the regionalisation of foreign and security policies. It draws, as mentioned, on the Region-Building Approach, as well as on a poststructuralist view of foreign policy. The first section of this chapter thus clarifies my understanding of foreign and security policy, identity and discourse. The focus on practices addressed in the second section builds on the ‘practice turn’ in IR and on securitisation theory.

The methodological framework in the third chapter devises a way to apply this approach in order to empirically analyse the discourses and practices of the relevant

actors of the regionalisation process. The first section rigorously explains the documents, principles and criteria used to carry out the poststructuralist discourse analysis, relying on Hansen's (2006) methodological guidelines. The second section describes the interpretative process-tracing used to trace the interplay between discourses and practices and its effect on regionalisation. It explains the choices of case studies, and the data and criteria used for the analysis; and gives a detailed account of the field research (the preparation, conduct and analysis of the interviews).

The comparison between West Africa and South America starts with chapter four. The first section of this chapter compares in a general manner the factors analysed by the IR literature to explain regional projects in the two regions; it shows the limitations and contradictions of these explanations. The second section focuses more precisely on the arguments given by the IR literature on the 'security factor'. It argues that these arguments are part of a 'normative securitising' discourse framing the regionalisation process in both regions. Lastly, the third section criticises how this literature treats the actors of the regionalisation process as objective factors.

Chapter five analyses the official regional discourses in West Africa and South America, which are produced by the regional organisations, ECOWAS, Mercosur and Unasur. It identifies the main discourses structuring the regionalisation processes in the two regions. These official discourses are key to understand the empirical processes in the two regions as they frame the field of possibilities of regional practices.

Chapter six examines the 'discursive encounter' between the regional and 'external actors'. The first section looks at how Nigeria and Brazil – in the context of the region – constitute the regional official discourses. The second section analyses

more precisely the encounter between the regional powers and the ‘external’ actors, the convergences, divergences and tensions.

Lastly, chapter seven seeks to show how this encounter constitutes regional practices through two case studies: first in the case of regional interventions; and then by looking at the regional management of transnational security threats. It analyses how the dominant discourses are (re)produced diffused and occasionally challenged through these social practices.

The conclusion to the thesis ties altogether the theoretical framework to the empirical findings in both regions in order to draw more general insights on the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

Chapter 1. Literature review

Introduction

This first chapter of this doctoral thesis reviews the literature on regional projects with a particular focus on approaches concerned with the link between regions and security. The different literatures present limits in their explanation of regional projects, and share in particular one major shortcoming: an exclusive focus on the explanatory power of a set of material and ideational factors conceptualised as causing the regionalisation process. They tend to present regional projects as the ‘natural’ or ‘rational’ outcome of factors such as security issues, globalisation, interdependence, regional identity and so on. These frameworks are rather deterministic, and sometimes teleological, and leave aside the role of the relevant actors in this process. They do not question or analyse how regional actors actually give meaning to the material and ideational factors; meaning that arises through complex historical processes. The representations of the regional actors (in particular the regional powers), the political project they carry through their attempt at defining the region, and the historical context, which are crucial to understand the process of regionalisation, are thus generally ignored in the International Relations (IR) literature.

Moreover, regions tend to be depicted as independent units responding to factors stemming from the international context such as globalisation, international security issues or great powers’ interventions. However, the meaning and expectations that the concept of regional integration can carry for regions across the world, with particular reference to the EU integration project always lurking in the background, is not analysed; neither are interactions between actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the region.

This chapter reviews the different IR literature, going from the most positivist approaches to more constructivist ones. While the positivist approaches usually focus on objective factors (but not exclusively), constructivist literatures increasingly take into account ideational factors. However, they all share certain determinism and establish a dichotomy between objective and ideational factors that limits a comprehensive understanding of regionalisation. For instance, it does not enable them to properly conceptualise regional identity as a central dimension of the process, which is at the core of the actors' discourses and practices when constructing the regional project. This issue is only overcome with the Region-Building Approach.

The first section examines, in a chronological way, the most positivist approaches on regions: Classical Integration Theory (CIT), the New Regionalism Approach (NRA) and Contemporary European Union (EU) Studies. The second section reviews more constructivist accounts of regional projects: Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), the Security Communities (SC) literature, and the Region-Building Approach (RBA). Finally, the last section looks more particularly at the IR literature on regional powers to discuss the conceptualisation of their role in the regionalisation process.

I. Positivist approaches on regional projects

This section chronologically reviews the most positivist approaches from Classical Integration Theory to the New Regionalism Approach, and finishes with contemporary EU studies. The latter builds the bridge with the constructivist literatures on regions discussed in the following section.

1. Classical Integration Theory

The progress of regional integration in Europe after the Second World War led to the development of a literature that aimed to explain the overall process of EU integration through the elaboration of a comprehensive theory of regional integration (Rosamond 2008, 81). This Classical Integration Theory (CIT) includes two main approaches, neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism with its classical and its liberal variants. While developed in the decades following the Second World War, these approaches are still influential. Indeed, as we will see, the NRA and the SC literature draw on neo-functionalists insights; and intergovernmentalism is considered as one of the most valid theories of regional integration. However, they come with a number of problems concerning their conceptualisation of states' identities and interests, and show a rather deterministic dimension when explaining the dynamic of integration.

i The teleological and deterministic neofunctionalist process

The core of neofunctionalist theory concerns its prediction of the creation of a new political community starting from the integration of 'low politics' (basic services to citizens, economy, etc.) through the process of spill-over until integration brings 'loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states' (Haas 1958b, 16). This process starts with an increasing level of interdependence between states which turns integration and the creation of common institutions into the most effective way to solve common problems.¹⁰ These supranational institutions would first handle technical and economic-related issues until they acquire more competences in the field of 'high politics' (politics, security and defence) through a spill over process leading to the development of a new regional identity. Hurrell

¹⁰ This argument is one of the main elements of the international community discourse on 'regional integration' highlighted in the introduction.

(1995, 59-60) clearly underlines that the integration process elaborated by Haas includes two kinds of spill over: a functional one where small steps towards integration concerning unimportant technical issues would highlight other problems stemming from the increased interdependence and thus require further cooperation; and a political spill over where the creation of supranational technocratic institutions would – through a process of socialisation – foster a shift of loyalties of the national elites working in these institutions. These parallel developments would create a self-reinforcing process together with the growing of supranational institutions (Haas 1958a, 451). This theory has been almost completely abandoned following the obstacles encountered by the European Community in deepening its political integration – thereby giving a solid argument to its critics who were able to show that the evolution towards a unified political community was not an automatic self-sustaining process.

Nevertheless, neofunctionalism's focus on factors such as the role of institutions, identity redefinition and elite socialisation is a major insight to understand the complexities of the regionalisation process. On the one hand, it opens the way for a de-essentialisation of sovereignty and of the security dilemma as ever-lasting principles of international life as neorealists would put it. Furthermore, Haas, in contrast to neorealist and neoliberal scholars, does not treat identity and interests as given and exogenous variables. Indeed, in his framework identity and interests are not given but are redefined through the integration process. However, on the other hand, he assumes that the identities and interests of actors will be positively transformed through interaction towards the building of trust and of an increasing identification between the actors participating in the process. Haas treats states as like-units that will undergo the same transformation through regional integration – therefore not

taking into account that the member states may have various identities and interests that could also hinder the spill over and socialisation processes.

This problem is part of the main criticism usually addressed to Haas's framework: its teleological and deterministic nature. Besides the example of the EU, further empirical studies have shown that this spill-over from 'low politics' to 'high politics' within the framework of supranational institutions is not the only – neither the most common – road to regional integration. The two case studies of this thesis are good illustrations of possible alternative paths: ECOWAS is a rather clear instance of integration through 'high politics' (security and defence) which is the driving force of regionalisation in the region; while Mercosur and Unasur were created as, and continue to be, purely intergovernmental organisations. The deterministic linearity of Haas's regional integration process leaves aside the fact that regional actors can have different representations of, and therefore different policies towards, increased interdependence. Hence, while neo-functionalism starts to grasp the phenomenon of regionalisation beyond the neorealist/neoliberal paradigm, it is at the same time too teleological to understand the complexities of the process and the role of regional actors and the context in constituting it.

ii Intergovernmentalism: the impossibility of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies

The other major CIT, intergovernmentalism, directly opposes neofunctionalism: it rejects any socio-economic determinism in the integration process and stresses the importance of the sovereignty principle for governments (Moravcsik 1993, 475-476). In its classical variant, Hoffman (1995, 84-89) argues that all decisions concerning integration (even in 'low politics') are seen as political and taken by states according to their interests and through a process of intergovernmental bargaining; thus limiting

the possibility of spill over. A distinction is made between 'high politics' which is completely immune to integration, and 'low politics' which allow for the existence of some negative integration as long as states' sovereignty and national identity are not threatened by it. The liberal variant of intergovernmentalism developed by Moravcsik (1993, 481) agrees on the fact that the main source of integration resides in states' interests; it however makes the assumption that these interests are elaborated during intragovernmental bargaining. This bargaining takes place between the government and societal actors who believe some of their interests can be better satisfied at the European level and task their governments with creating central institutions. In parallel, governments have an interest in supporting the creation of common institutions in order to keep some room for manoeuvre in their relations with societal actors. Hence, for classical intergovernmentalists, political and security integration will be hindered by states' sovereignty and unchanging interests (Hoffman 1995, 89-90); while for liberal intergovernmentalists, integration would be impossible in these fields as neither societal actors nor governments have an interest in this dimension of integration (Moravcsik 1993, 494).

The emphasis of this theory on sovereignty and national interest can appear as appropriate in the light of some empirical developments. Indeed, intergovernmental bargaining is the decision-making process encountered in most regional organisations, with some exceptions. Nevertheless, while it is true that no regional organisation has become a unified political community, these two variants essentialise national sovereignty as a principle that cannot be overcome instead of seeing it as a social construct being transformed through multiple processes such as regionalisation. The increasing number of competences passing from the member states to the EU testifies to this transformation. Similarly, in ECOWAS, as we will

see in the empirical chapters, the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs are increasingly challenged through supranational decision-making processes and regional practices.

Finally, both Hoffman and Moravcsik take states, and societal identities in the liberal case, as given and exogenous to the integration process. The assumption is that, on the one side, identities cannot evolve through interactions and new practices, they are set once and for all; on the other side, it posits that all states and societal actors have a similar national identity seeking the same interests in the same ways – autonomy, sovereignty and economic wealth. In this way, this approach rejects any historicisation of the regional context and the possibility that the identities and interests of the member states could be not uniform and/or coherent with regional integration.¹¹ Therefore, it only provides a partial understanding of the process by elaborating a reductive theory of regional integration based on a dualism opposing sovereignty and national interest, on the one side, to a supranational community on the other side.

At the end, while both the neofunctionalist and the intergovernmentalist versions of regional integration are empirical trends that can be empirically witnessed in regional projects across the world (sometimes even at the same time); they do not provide by themselves an explanation of the complexities of this social phenomenon.

2. The New Regionalism Approach

i Regionalisation as an effect of a set of material and ideational factors

The New Regionalism Approach (NRA) introduced some changes in the study of regional projects by distancing itself from the aim of finding an overall theory

¹¹ With the possibility that some states can perceive security and defence integration as being in their interest.

explaining regional integration and from the study of regional trade or common market agreements. Firstly, there is no ‘natural’ region: ‘all regions are socially constructed and politically contested’ (Hurrell 1995, 38-39) – and regionalism is a project covering a variety of fields (politics, economy, security, culture, development, social affairs, etc.) that goes beyond the creation of free trade areas or security alliances (Fawcett and Hurrell 1995; Hettne, Inotai and Sunkel 2000; Schulz, Soderbaum and Ojendal 2001; Farrell, Hettne and Van Langenhove 2005, etc.). NRA scholars provide different definitions of regionalism but they all refer to a project including multidimensional cooperation, a focus on the building of a regional identity, and the presence of states and non-state actors participating and driving the project (Söderbaum 2003). Hence, for Fawcett (2004, 434), regionalism is a policy and a project whereby states and non-states actors cooperate and coordinate strategy within a given region with the aim to promote common goals in one or more issue areas. The second important concept at the centre of the NRA is regionalisation, which emphasises the dynamic and fluctuating nature of the emergence of a regional project. Warleigh-Lack (2008, 51) defines it as:

‘an explicit, but not necessarily formally institutionalised, process of adapting participant state norms, policy-making processes, policy style, policy content, political opportunity structures, economy and identity (potentially at both elite and popular levels) to both align with and shape a new collective set of priorities, norms and interests at regional level, which may itself then evolve, dissolve or reach stasis.’

NRA scholars usually have the ambition to analyse the impact of three levels of factors: the domestic, the regional and the global – with an emphasis on the global level and the effects of globalisation (Hettne 1999, xxii).¹² The NRA also promotes a comparative approach to analyse regions and draw generalisations in order to explain

¹² These factors can be: economic interdependence, security issues, external great powers, national, regional and international institutions, etc.

the phenomenon of regionalism (De Lombaerde 2011). It however excludes the EU most of the time, depicting it as a particular or *sui generis* case (Warwleigh-Lack 2008, 43-44). Hence, the aim of the NRA is to better understand the how and why of regionalism, while analysing the different logics of regionalisation and particularities of the different regions resulting from the three levels of factors.

The NRA raises many theoretical and empirical problems leading to its relative neglect in recent years. Firstly, the factors coming from the three levels of analysis are so numerous and interact in such complex ways with different structures and outcomes that the aim of comparing regionalisation processes in different regions in order to find commonalities might be handicapped by the overwhelming complexity of the process, and the potential finding that all regions are actually *sui generis* cases in terms of the material and ideational factors causing them.¹³ Moreover, this comparison seems to define regions as independent units that can be affected by global level factors instead of acknowledging the complexes interdependences and interactions between actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the region in term, for instance, of the constitution of the meaning of regional integration.

It also leaves aside the fact that these factors are not directly causing the process. The way regional actors react to these factors depends on their interpretation and the meaning they give to them; states have different identities and interests that were constructed through their historical experiences. Accordingly, there is not a unique rational policy to respond to these factors that any state would apply; a stance that appears quite deterministic. The presence of similar factors, can therefore lead to a variety of policies depending on the context, which we will see first in chapter four

¹³ Material factors here refer to material elements that exist independently of actors and have a direct effect on the phenomenon under study; as such they are objective factors. Objective factors also include a whole range of institutional factors such as national or regional institutions in the case of the IR literature on regions. Ideational factors, conversely, refer to subjective claims made by actors.

when criticising the different factors used by the literature on South America and West Africa to explain the regionalisation process in the two regions; and in chapter seven when comparing the contrasting policies launched by ECOWAS and Unasur to deal with transnational security issues.

Secondly, on the theoretical level the NRA framework is very ambiguous; it provides an umbrella to numerous scholars with different theoretical assumptions. Söderbaum (2003, 2) rightly notices that ‘there is surprisingly little *theoretical* debate in this burgeoning field’. Most of these scholars build a framework which limits itself to integrate material and ideational factors in their study of regionalisation; and this, in order ‘to provide historical and empirical rather than conceptual insights’ (Söderbaum 2003, 2). However, and also due to this lack of theoretical debate, they maintain a dichotomy between ideational and material factors which are supposed to provide complementary explanations to the process (even though they usually stress one type of factor over the other). This dichotomy is in tension with their definition of regions as social constructs, in particular because they objectify ideational factors.¹⁴ Regional identity, for instance, is integrated as an independent variable next to material factors – resulting from shared historical processes – or as an outcome of the regionalisation process. The concept of ‘regionness’ shows this well, according to (Hettne 2003, 28) it:

‘defines the position of a particular region (...) in terms of regional coherence and identity, which can be seen as a long-term endogenous historical process changing over time from coercion, the building of empires and nations, to more voluntary cooperation’.

It can be argued against this dichotomy that objective factors such as security issues or economic interdependence cannot have an effect on the regional policy of a state

¹⁴ By objectifying I mean here that they conceptualise ideational factors as having a direct causal effect on the phenomenon under study, in the same way than material factors.

independently of its representations of itself and the region, and therefore of its regional identity. The two types of factors are deeply intertwined in order to produce some effect. Moreover, regional identity is a much more unstable and political category than conceived by the NRA; it is constantly (re)produced by the actors and constitutes the regionalisation process, and thus cannot be merely analysed as an independent or dependent variable. I will develop this point further in the next chapter concerning the theoretical framework of this dissertation.

ii A normative project

A related problem arises from the NRA's study of the security dimension of regional projects which concerns its tendency to view regionalism as the lasting solution to achieving peace and stability. This link between New Regionalism and peace is part of the normative dimension of the NRA: it associates regionalism with security, wealth, development and ecological sustainability through the building of a new 'type of world order' (Farrell 2005, 8-9). Hettne (1998, 215-216), for example, argues that the only way for 'peripheral regions' – economically stagnant, politically turbulent and war-prone regions – to become less peripheral is to become more regionalised; the alternative being further disintegration. He adds that national disintegration seems to reinforce regionalisation via threats to regional security, as sooner or later there will be a reorganisation of social power and political authority most probably at the regional level. This deterministic vision is a reminder of Haas's teleological approach and, as we will see, echoes the security community literature. It depicts regionalisation as the rational and necessary answer to a range of problems, neglecting the fact that threats or crises can be perceived and reacted upon in many ways depending on the constructed identity and interests of the state concerned; thus possibly leading to different policies that can exclude regionalisation – and this

including in ‘peripheral regions’ if the process is seen as threatening the sovereignty principle of the member states of a regional organisation.

Hence, the NRA suffers from several shortcomings due to its framework conceptualising regions as the determined outcome of a set of material and ideational factors and its normative dimension.

3. Contemporary EU studies

The field of contemporary EU studies came as a reaction to Classical Integration Theory. The ambition to elaborate a theory of the overall process of integration was replaced with the aim to explain the institutional form and the nature of the particular political entity that the EU was becoming through concepts such as multilevel governance system, compound polity, etc.¹⁵ A few debates emerged on the EU’s foreign and security policy around specific issues such as its consistency and coherence (Nuttall 2005), the EU as a normative, civilian or structural power in international relations, etc. (Duchêne 1972; Manners 2002, 2006; Lucarelli and Manners 2006; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008; Laïdi 2008). These debates are, however, not concerned with the conditions of emergence of this policy. More specifically, two fields of research within contemporary EU studies are relevant to this research: the literature on Europeanisation and the one on the EU security governance.

i Europeanisation: a positivist ambition to explain a social phenomena

The literature on Europeanisation studies every field of EU policies and covers various processes. In order to analyse EU foreign policy, Wong (2005, 136-140)

¹⁵ This has been criticised by tenants of both the NRA and EU studies who are trying to build a bridge between these two academic traditions. De Lombaerde, Söderbaum and Van Langenhove (2010, 745), for example, argue that ‘there has been a tendency within EU studies during the recent decade to consider the EU as a nascent, if unconventional, polity in its own right. This view holds that the EU should be studied as a political system rather than as a project of regional integration or regionalism, thereby downplaying the similarities between the EU and other regionalist projects.’

classified these processes of Europeanisation into five categories: 1/national adaptation, a top-down process whereby states adapt their foreign policy in function of the EU logic which leads to convergence among them; 2/national projection, a bottom-up process through which states try to export their domestic policy models and ideas to the EU; 3/identity reconstruction through elite socialisation; 4/modernisation – referring more specifically to the enlargement policy; 5/policy isomorphism among the states of the community which can lead to a shared sense of legitimate/illegitimate choices. The ambition of this literature is therefore to see whether the general process of Europeanisation can lead to a convergence of the EU member states policies on the basis of shared norms and interests. This would be illustrated for instance by a coordination reflex or *réflexe communautaire* when decisions are taken by member states (Wong 2007, 323-329). This outcome would be the result of the EU's direct regulations pressuring member states but also of indirect effects through norm diffusion, social learning and interaction (Vink and Graziano 2007, 10; Wong 2007, 322). The concept of Europeanisation is therefore similar to Warleigh-Lack's (2008, 51) definition of regionalisation that was previously cited.

Theoretically, Europeanisation studies fit within an institutionalist approach, whether rational, historical or sociological,¹⁶ and/or identify with a soft constructivism. This positivist framework poses many problems for the conceptualisation of identity and socialisation used by Europeanisation scholars. Indeed, they are in general very uneasy with the operationalisation of socialisation in

¹⁶ Rational-choice institutionalism is concerned with the responses of domestic political actors to new opportunities provided by European integration; historical institutionalism focuses on the temporal dimension of domestic adjustment process to the EU, path-dependency and the 'stickiness' of institutions and policies; sociological institutionalism examine for instance the logic of 'appropriateness' in the response of domestic actors to the EU institutions and regulations, norm adaptation or socialisation of the elites within the EU institutions and through interaction (Vink and Graziano 2007, 12-13; Bulmer 2007, 50-51). However most of Europeanisation studies use a mix of these different institutionalisms.

their research design as shown by their acknowledgement of the difficulty to measure this phenomenon and find objective indicators for this purpose (Vink and Graziano 2007, 16; Radaelli and Pasquier 2007, 39-40; Wong 2007, 330-32). Many tensions underlie these frameworks: while recognising the importance of interactions and socialisation processes, their attempts to measure it through the definition of independent variables and indicators leads to an over-simplification of the process, and to overlook the role of the historical context and the construction of the identities and interests of actors which shape their propensity to be sensitive to socialisation, policy convergence or to attempt policy projection. In this way, Wong (2007, 323-329) conceptualises national projection as the process through which the national foreign policy of a member state affects and contributes to the development of the European foreign policy. With the purpose of assessing this process he designed a set of indicators: the state's attempts to influence the foreign policies of other member states, the externalisation of national foreign policy positions onto the EU level, etc. Hence, he looks at particular instances of policies projections, but is not concerned with, on the one hand, how states can frame even the conditions of possibility of regionalisation in this policy field (the form and extent it will take); and on the other hand, with why a state would do so in such a way. These are questions that are difficult to trace through the use of objective indicators as they are deeply subjective issues: they require in-depth qualitative analyses of the actors' identities and representations, and their policies towards the region. A similar problem arises when trying to objectively measure identity reconstruction (Wong 2007, 323-329). Identity is a social construct which is constantly (re)produced by the actors through their discourses and practices. It is at the core of the process of Europeanisation instead of being a mere outcome of it as conceptualised by scholars in this field.

ii EU security governance: a lack of region

The concept of security governance to study the EU emerged as a way to examine the complex interactions within the EU institutional system in interaction with the management of the post-Cold War security agenda (Kirchner and Sperling 2007, 3). The argument put forward is that since the EU multilevel governance system includes a multiplicity of actors (state and non-state) and, therefore, a multiplicity of tools and instruments to deal with security issues, its functioning cannot be grasped anymore with traditional concepts such as security alliances (Kirchner and Sperling 2007, 16). In addition, the apparition of ‘new security threats’ on the EU security agenda led to the development of new tools to handle them. A new concept is thus needed to study this evolution (Kirchner and Sperling 2007, 3; Webber 2007, 48-49). Accordingly, the concept of security governance has been used as a kind of heuristic tool enabling the researcher to include the actions of actors situated at all levels in order to understand the institutional dynamics of the EU security governance system. Kirchner and Sperling (2007, 21) categorise this system into four areas of action: assurance, prevention, protection and compellence.¹⁷

EU security governance is thus considered by the authors as a pre-theoretical concept (Kirchner and Sperling 2007, 18). This under-theorisation has been criticised in a special issue of *European Security* edited by Christou and Croft (2010) with the ambition to increase the rigor of the concept by adding a more theoretical dimension. Before studying how the EU manages security issues, their ambition is to examine how the EU’s security logics are constructed and the implications this has on practices of security governance (Christou and Croft 2010, 337). To do so, they

¹⁷ This literature was followed up by a recent literature on regional security governance such as Kirchner and Dominguez (2011) who apply these four areas of actions to other regional settings. See also Breslin and Croft (2012). However, these studies remain rather descriptive inasmuch they do not attempt to theorise the emergence of regional security governance.

bridge the concept of EU security governance with securitisation and insecurity theories as respectively theorised by the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. While the former conceptualises securitisation as a performative speech-act that gives a security quality to certain problems by framing them as security issues in order to justify exceptional measures; insecurity theory conceptualises security practices as ‘creating insecurities as part of a process of governing a population’ (Christou et al. 2010, 348). The core argument of this insecurity approach is that ‘security practices internal to the nation-state (policing) and those external (military practices) have merged into one “field of security”, and hence there is a new field of security where the traditional internal/external divide no longer exists’ (Christou et al. 2010, 346). The EU would thus be an ideal example of this internal-external continuum leading to the emergence of new forms of governmentality in the Foucauldian sense¹⁸ illustrated by deliberate processes of insecurity of borders or identities to govern the population, and potentially leading to a constraining of freedom (Christou et al. 2010, 346). Hence, their aim is to use securitisation and insecurity theory to analyse the EU across a broad array of issue areas and examine, on the one hand, how and where ‘new’ security issues emerge, how and if they become securitised, and the impact of securitisation moves on governance; and, on the other hand, drawing on insecurity theory, looking at the consequences in terms of governmentality. Finally, they contend that this revised security governance concept could be applicable to other security governance structures and processes (Christou et al. 2010, 350).

The theorisation of the security governance concept was indeed needed; at this point it only led to purely descriptive studies that did not question the effect of these

¹⁸ Governmentality in Foucault’s work refers to the techniques and practices of management of the population developed by the state.

EU security practices on the EU's identity and constitution as a political actor. Their main research agenda, looking at the 'EU's actorness in terms of its (re)constructed discursive interjections, praxis, and how this impacts on the EU's identity as a security actor' is very much shared by this thesis in the cases of West Africa and South America; in particular the recognition that 'the EU's identity and role as a security actor is not simply constituted by the EU and its member states, but also by the actors with which it interfaces' (Christou et al. 2010, 347).

However, the reformulated concept still suffers from several problems. Firstly, the focus on 'deliberate practices' of securitisation implies that actors are totally free to intentionally (in)securitise any issue or group; the framework is supposed to take discourse seriously but it does not take into account the representations of the actors that constrain the range of possible practices, which should also be investigated. This is one of the main problems of the Paris School as will be further developed in the next chapter. Secondly, more than reformulating the EU security governance concept, they are applying securitisation theory to the EU. Doing so, they are losing the concept of region which was already not at the core of previous works on EU security governance: the focus is on security and institutions while neglecting the specificity of the regional level – how the concept of region raises certain expectations and a particular meaning which can influence the security practices of the actors within the EU. The representation of the region – how regional actors perceive it – weigh in the way EU actors want or can securitise or not particular issues at the EU level. For instance, some issues can be securitised as a region-building practice. Arguably, this could be said to be the case of the EU development policy: one of the objectives of the mainstreaming of security in the development policy is to develop the agency of the EU in the security field. Conversely, a reluctance to securitise can come from a

will to keep the EU out of particular issues because of a fear of a further increase of its competences. Hence, the idea of the region should be brought back into the framework as its meaning for the actors contributes to frame the practices of security governance. Lastly, the authors of the special issue criticise traditional security governance for being too Eurocentric. As a remedy to overcome this problem they recommend to look at the external dimension of the framing of the EU's security issues and practices – a needed move acknowledging that the construction of the EU's security logics is not purely internal (Christou et al. 2010, 345). However, their ambition to apply their concept to other security governance processes is still hindered by certain Eurocentrism. Indeed, the assumption of an internal-external continuum context leading to practices of governmentality which is put forward by insecuritisation theory is very particular to the EU and difficult to apply to other regional environments. Mercosur and Unasur, for example, keep a strong divide between an internal and external security field; and their member states do so in order to hinder the development of further security practices at the regional level that could threaten their sovereignty. Conversely, ECOWAS is reproducing the EU internal-external continuum as a result of its continuous interaction with the EU. Instead of taking this internal-external continuum as granted in other regions, it should be analysed as a particular kind of security practice, with certain political effects (including region-building) and promoted by certain actors such as the EU. The conclusion of this doctoral thesis will give some further insights on this point based on the comparative analysis of West Africa and South America's security practices.

The different literature analysed in this first section show several problems that limit their contribution to the analysis of regionalisation processes: a certain

determinism with the conceptualisation of states' identity and interest as uniform (CIT), or the depiction of regionalism/regionalisation as the outcome of a set of objectified material and ideational factors (NRA, Europeanisation approach). Regions are usually understood as units that can be compared or analysed independently instead of interdependent processes that influence each other and take part to to the same international context (NRA, EU security governance). More generally, these approaches neglect the role of regional actors' differentiated identities and interests, as well as their representation of regional integration, in constituting their policy towards the regional project.

II. From constructivist accounts on regions and security to the region-building approach

In parallel to the NRA two other literatures emerged on regions, both more constructivist in their approach and focusing specifically on the link between regions and security: the regional security complex (RSC) and the security community (SC) literatures. While providing a more comprehensive understanding of the regionalisation process than the literatures discussed in the previous section, their soft constructivist framework still ignores how actors give meaning and process material and ideational factors to construct regional projects. In parallel, the region-building approach (RBA) developing in Critical Geography and then in IR is the first literature on regions to recognise this central role of actors. In this section we will first analyse the RSC approach before looking at the SC literature and finishing with the RBA.

1. Regional Security Complex Theory: an analysis of regional security dynamics

i A difficult position between neorealism and constructivism

The security complex literature began in 1983 with Barry Buzan's *People, States and Fear* but has largely evolved since then with Buzan's later works, and was built on in different ways by other scholars (see, for instance, Lake and Morgan 1997). Buzan, together with Waever (2003), and with Waever and de Wilde (1998), developed a framework to study regions and security. This framework has two aims: on the one side, to develop a regional security complex theory (RSCT); and, on the other side, to elaborate the concept of securitisation for the purpose of analysing regional security dynamics. This concept can be used to study RSC as well as to analyse, more generally, security issues.¹⁹

This interest in regions stems from the assumption by these scholars that international relations after the Cold War have a more regionalised character as a result of the end – or at least the decrease – of superpower intervention outside of their regions. They claim that threats 'travel more easily over short distances than over long ones' – insecurity being linked to proximity (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 11). As a consequence, security interdependence is higher between neighbouring countries whose security practices will constitute a regional security complex shaped by the distribution of power between them and their historical relations of amity and enmity (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998; Buzan and Waever 2003). In *Regions and Powers*, Buzan and Waever (2003) present an elaborate version of RSCT that aims at fulfilling three purposes: to discover which level of analysis is the most appropriate to study security dynamics (domestic, state-to-state,

¹⁹ This project is part of the academic field of security studies under the label of the Copenhagen School.

region-to-region, global); to organise empirical studies in each RSC; and finally, to establish scenarios of RSCs' evolution on the basis of the possible forms an RSC can take. The RSC's form will depend on the distribution of power – how many regional powers, great powers or superpowers does the region include – as well as on background factors (history, religion, geography, culture, etc.). Following the variation of one or more of these factors an RSC can transform on a spectrum going from conflict formation to security regime, and finally to security community. Buzan and Wæver (2003, 72) identify an RSC as a social structure that is more than the sum of its parts. Indeed, they conceive it as ultimately defined by the interactions between its units; the causes behind their actions being internal (domestic vulnerabilities for instance) and/or regional and global (global environmental or economic problem, etc.).²⁰ However, according to them, some autonomy is left for the acts of securitisation made by regional actors. These acts of securitisation, as already mentioned, are speech-acts made by securitising actors who attribute to particular problems the status of existential threats and call for extraordinary measures against them, therefore leading to new security practices. These security practices – as instances of securitisation – serve to connect the units forming an RSC through the securitisation or desecuritisation of their relations, or through the collective securitisation of threats.

This theory, while aiming at being comprehensive and providing a neutral framework to analyse regions and security dynamics, suffers from a severe tension stemming from its twofold neorealist and constructivist theoretical framework. Indeed, their ambition is to fit RSCT within a neorealist framework of systemic international anarchy where the distribution of capabilities is the determining factor

²⁰ Similarly to the NRA, material factors are central to explain the formation of a RSC.

of states' behaviour. At the same time they add a constructivist logic when they define securitisation as a speech act independent from whether the issue is a 'real' threat or not; they also define the regions as socially constructed by history and cultural factors. Therefore, on the one hand, a change in the distribution of power can (in principle) directly transform an RSC; however, actors within the RSC have some autonomy²¹ through their discourse to maintain or change the security dynamics and thereby the RSC: 'leaders and peoples have considerable freedom to determine what they do and do not define as security threats' (Buzan and Waever 2003, 26). Does this mean that either a change in the distribution of power or a new act of securitisation can transform a RSC, or that the change in the distribution of power must be mediated by a securitisation discourse to have an effect on the RSC? The answer is not very clear in their framework but it rather seems to be the first case as they claim to have a materialist view of the distribution of power (Buzan and Waever 2003, 3-5). This is problematic as these two stances lead to different approaches in the study of regions: one where materiality is the objective factor defining the regional dynamics. In this case, history, the context and the practices of actors are partly discarded from the explanation; and one where materiality only has meaning and thus effect through the securitisation (discursive) practices of the actors. Buzan and Waever would gain coherence by adopting a fully constructivist and discursive approach as the 'either materiality or discursivity' is a difficult-to-defend theoretical position, leading to ambiguous empirical inquiry. As well put by Acharya (2007, 636), 'The Waeverian constructivist façade of R&P sits uneasily atop its "Buzantine" neorealist foundation.'

²¹ The question of autonomy can also be questioned in the same way than for the EU security governance literature drawing on securitisation. Indeed, these speech acts or discursive practices are conditioned by the historical experiences or discursive structures of meaning in which the states are embedded. For instance, what will be considered a national or a regional threat will be conditioned by these structures of meaning. The case studies in chapter seven will show this very clearly.

ii The securitisation approach and regions: a focus on security dynamics at the expense of regions

Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998, 5) establish that issues, in order to be securitised, have to 'be staged as existential threats to a referent object by a securitising actor who thereby generates endorsement of emergency measures beyond the rules that could otherwise bind.' From there the issue becomes a security issue avoiding the rules of 'normal' political debate not because it is a 'real' existential threat but because it is presented as such (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 22-23). In order to be securitised successfully an issue has to go through different stages: a securitising move (a discourse uttered by a securitising actor) which has to be accepted by its audience in order to legitimise the breaking free of normal rules and possible emergency actions. The aim for the analyst, according to the authors, is to study this practice: 'who can "do" or "speak" security successfully, on what issues, under what conditions and with what effects?' (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 27). The authors point also to some facilitating conditions to the securitisation process: the following of the linguistic-grammatical rules of security speeches, some contextual and social conditions such as the authority of the speaker, and the specific features of the alleged threats which facilitate or impede securitisation (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 32).

On the one hand, their objective with the elaboration of this securitisation approach is to justify the widening of the security agenda beyond military issues, while avoiding the problem of extending it to any possible issue – to be in the security agenda issues have to follow a logic of security which is specified by the securitisation process. Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998, 7-8) then define five sectors (military, political, economic, environmental and societal) with their

distinctive patterns of interaction. This division between sectors has an analytical purpose. They stress, however, that in order to achieve some understanding of the security dynamic they have to be re-aggregated at the end.

On the other hand, their aim is to apply this securitisation approach to regional dynamics: they built these different sectors as heuristic devices to examine if the securitisation logic of each sector is regional and if the security dynamics of all the sectors coincide in the same RSC. Consequently, the RSCT is actually not useful to study the construction of regions: their RSCs are purely theoretical constructions, heuristic devices utilised to examine the security dynamics of regions. They are not interested in regions as such, their interest is in security dynamics which they assume are mostly regional since the end of the Cold War. Indeed, for Buzan and Waever (2003, 20, endnote 2), a RSC should not 'be seen as a discursive construction by the actors. We are not (in this context) interested in whether the actors define themselves as a region (...).' They also add that RSCs are a 'very specific, functionally defined type of region, which may or may not coincide with more general understandings of region' (Buzan and Waever 2003, 48).²² A statement in contradiction with their empirical analyses where RSCs often conflate with regional political projects. Hence, Neumann (1994, 57) rightly criticises Buzan for marginalising 'The politics of defining and redefining the region'.²³

Finally, their division of security between sectors appears reductive. It hides the link existing between security and identity while confining identity to societal security. According to Buzan and Waever (2003, 119-120) societal insecurity exists

²² Other proponents of RSCT such as Lake and Morgan (1997, 9) are more interested in regional projects than Buzan and Waever as they seek to construct 'theories of regional order'. However, their focus on physical safety only, and their conceptualisation of a RSC as the product of a set of material and ideational factors, largely diminished the insights that Buzan and Waever provided through their concept of securitisation.

²³ Indeed, here again, the investigation of security dynamics loses sight of the fact that the concept and meaning of region for the actors can influence security practices.

when communities (nations, religious or ethnic groups, etc.) define some events or a potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community. They stress that ‘threats to identity are thus always a question of the construction of something as threatening some “we” – and often thereby actually contributing to the construction or reproduction of “us”.’ This definition is rather dubious as it could also easily apply to other sectors (military, political, environmental and economic): securitisation in these sectors is always the result of a group/community’s identity and how its securitising actors perceive it, even if the referent objects and the securitising actors might not be the same than in the societal sector. Even Buzan and Waever (2003, 119-120) seem to paradoxically imply this when they claim that often the main issue that decides whether security conflicts will emerge is whether one or another self-definition wins out in a society. The same ambiguity can be found in their chapter on political security when they explain that:

‘the traditional case of political security involves one state making appeals in the name of sovereignty trying to fend off some threat from another actor that is usually external, such as another state, but that is often combined with an internal threat.’ (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 154-155)

This kind of securitisation strategy is clearly a way to reinforce a particular identity and legitimise some practices against an internal Other seen as a threat, by linking it to an external threat. This was particularly well demonstrated by Campbell’s (1992) study of US foreign policy. The problem in Buzan and Waever framework stems from their unclear definition of identity. In their societal sector definition, threats to identity have a very narrow scope which includes three issues: migration, cultural influence, integration or secessionist processes. This comes from the fact that their aim with societal security was simply to integrate certain kind of threats that were not included in classical security studies such as ethnic conflict or migration, as well as

acknowledging non-state collectivities as possible referent objects for securitisation. It was never about reflecting on the link between identity and security. Threats to identity can have much wider implications. Indeed, just about anything can be identified as a threat to identity in all the sectors defined by Buzan and Waever. Identity can be about political or economic values, it can also be linked to territoriality or history, etc.²⁴

Moreover, they take 'identities as socially constituted but not radically more so than other social structures. Identities as other social constructions can petrify and become relatively constant elements to be reckoned with' (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, pp. 205-206). Thus, their view of identity is one of a static structure which, even if historically contingent, is durable and causes particular effects in the societal sector. They do not see identities as being fluid, multiple and sites of opposition and contestation between actors who try to impose their own self-understandings through discourse in order to justify some practices. In his critique of the Copenhagen School McSweeney (1996, 90) makes this clear:

'Collective identity is not "out there", waiting to be discovered. What is "out there" is identity discourse on the part of political leaders, intellectuals and countless others, who engage in the process of constructing, negotiating and affirming a response to the demand – at times urgent, mostly absent – for a collective image. Even in times of crisis, this is never more than a provisional and fluid image of ourselves as we want to be, limited by the facts of history. The relevance of this argument to the concept of societal security should be clear.'

²⁴ McSweeney's critique of identity and security in the Copenhagen School raises the same problem but draws a different conclusion from it. He argues that 'It is clear that "societal security" is the object of an *assumption* about its referent, not the object of inquiry. That would entail an inquiry into which of the indeterminate values susceptible to threat – including identity – may be vulnerable and require security. (...) If, rather than assuming that identity is the unique value vulnerable to threat, the authors had posed as a problem, "What is the focus of the security concerns of the people who comprise 'society'?", the intuitive evidence would have suggested a range of values, with economic welfare prominent' (McSweeney 1996, 84-85). He criticises them for assuming that a society can only be threatened by identity concerns; whereas I argue in a poststructuralist fashion that threats in all sectors are actually related to a particular conception of the identity of the referent. Security does not go without identity.

This conceptualisation of identity would be more coherent with the securitisation approach which is ultimately a 'winning' discourse contributing to the (re)production of 'us'. Once more, they offer an ambiguous theoretical position, a 'middle ground' which is difficult to defend as they do not want to engage further with constructivism; and this, in order to remain within a neorealist framework and assess the effect of 'identity threats' instead of viewing identity as constitutive of any kind of security practice.

Whereas the insights provided by the concept of securitisation are crucial to understand regional security dynamics; the neorealist materialist view of power maintained by Buzan and Waever and their objectified view of identity leads again to the dichotomy between material and ideational factors. Here again RSCs are, in the end, the causal outcome of a set of factors.

2. The Security Communities literature

i From Deutsch's transactionalist approach to Adler and Barnett's constructivism

The security community literature also looks at regions and security but with a different lens than the RSCT. Its focus is more specifically on the building of regional communities and the achievement of sustainable peace through this process. Indeed, this literature examines a particular geographic space where states enjoy a stable and durable peace. The concept of security community was first developed by Karl Deutsch (1969, 2; 17) and defined as a community where members maintain 'dependable expectations of peaceful change' based on a sense of 'we-ness', loyalty, shared identity and principles, collective norms and common understandings. Deutsch's approach is what has been called a transactionalist approach (Haas 1970, 627): the degree of integration attained by the security community stems mainly

from an increased level of transaction flows between societies; together with other intervening factors such as the compatibility between societal values, the mutual responsiveness of government, etc. (Deutsch 1969, 21). Although Deutsch's book was a major study demonstrating that relations between states are not deterministically governed by the security dilemma, it was limited by its focus on purely quantitative transactions – a limitation highlighted by Haas (1970, 627) who stresses, instead, the importance of how actors' perceive these transactions, and by Adler and Barnett (1998, 8-9) who emphasise as well the importance of their qualitative aspects and the social processes driving them.

Adler and Barnett (1998) were the first scholars to build on Deutsch's work with their book *Security Communities* that elaborated a comprehensive framework, using a constructivist approach, to study security communities.²⁵ They define a 'pluralistic security community'²⁶ as a 'transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 30). In such a community, states do not use force anymore to solve their disputes and conflicts; they use instead peaceful means such as diplomacy. This situation is made possible by the development of mutual trust and of a collective identity. In order to explain this development, Adler and Barnett (1998, 37-48) use a framework divided in three tiers: the first tier concerns precipitating conditions enabling new social interactions to take place. These conditions can be changes in technology, demography, environment, threats, etc., and are seen as triggering cooperation between the states. The second tier includes two kinds of factors working

²⁵ The apparent success of neo-realism to explain the Cold War period probably played a role in this extended lack of interest to Deutsch's approach in IR.

²⁶ Deutsch (1969) also analyses 'amalgamated security communities' where two or more units merge together and form a new entity. However, Adler and Barnett (1998, 5) only develop the case of 'pluralistic security communities' as they argue that this form is theoretically and empirically closer to actual developments in international politics and IR theory.

towards the development of mutual trust and collective identity. On the one side, 'structure factors' (power and knowledge); on the other side, 'process factors' comprising transactions, social and formal institutions, social learning and socialisation. These factors are supposed to interact and at the same time further each other. Finally, the third tier is constituted by the development of mutual trust and collective identity which are the necessary conditions producing dependable expectations of peaceful change. Adler and Barnett (1998, 50-57) also classify security communities through three chronological phases: security communities are first 'nascent' when states begin to consider how to coordinate their relations to increase mutual security and lower transaction costs for their exchanges; this stage is visible through an increase of diplomatic bilateral and multilateral exchanges, as well as through the establishment of regional institutions. The second stage concerns 'ascendant' security communities, characterized by increasingly dense networks, new institutions or organisations, tighter military coordination and cooperation, decrease of fear, new collective cognitive structures, etc. Here, an increase in mutual trust can be witnessed as well as the emergence of a collective identity. The last phase refers to 'mature' security communities when regional actors share an identity leading to dependable expectations of peaceful change. In this phase the security community can take on two forms. It can first be 'loosely-coupled' where states identify positively, and a similar 'way of life' is proclaimed supported by a governance system based on shared meanings. Secondly, the 'tightly-coupled' security community seems to represent a maximalist version where in addition 'mutual aid becomes a matter of habit', and 'the right to use force shifts from the units to the collectivity of sovereign states' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 56). Importantly as well, the

identity of people becomes exchangeable within the community to the point that all people share the exact same identity (Adler and Barnett 1998, 47).

Thus, Adler and Barnett thoroughly actualised and operationalised Deutsch's concept by giving it a structured theoretical framework to empirically study regions. Furthermore, they departed from Deutsch's focus on the quantity of transactions to emphasise the qualitative importance of processes of socialisation, social learning and the role of institutions to explain the development of a shared identity and collective trust. While this framework provides insights to the development of inter-state communities, it also suffers from a number of weaknesses in its theoretical foundation, as well as in its conception of identity, discourse, and region that limit its usefulness to understand the process of regionalisation as we will see in the following part.

ii The material/ideational dichotomy

Compared to the previous approaches reviewed in this chapter, the security community approach differentiates itself with the extent to which it takes ideational factors into account. However, similarly to them, one of its main issues concerns the dichotomy maintained between material, and ideational factors in its explanation of the emergence of security communities. This is a problem which concerns most of mainstream constructivist work where scholars try to assess and weigh against each other the influence of 'material'/'objective' factors, on the one side, and 'ideational'/'subjective' factors, on the other side. Logically, in this view, only the social world is constructed while the material world has meaning and influence by itself (Zehfuss 2002, 13). This soft constructivist position raises some tensions as was

seen with the RSCT.²⁷ This tension is obvious in Adler and Barnett's work. For example, in a later article elaborated as a response to their critics they appear ambiguous regarding this theoretical problem, they write that 'a shared identity is a collective meaning that becomes attached to material reality, thus helping to constitute the practices of security community at a later stage' (Adler and Barnett 2000, 324): does it mean that this collective meaning is a factor next to the material reality, or does it shape material reality? They seem to lean towards the second answer when they state that 'How the material world shapes, changes, and affects human interaction, and is affected by it, depends on prior and changing epistemic and normative interpretations of the material world' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 12-13). Nevertheless, throughout their analytical framework Adler and Barnett (1998) tend to empirically favour the first answer by contrasting material/realist factors to more constructivist factors.

What this explanation leaves aside is the role of regional actors and their representations – constructed through history – giving meaning and mediating this set of objective and ideational factors – which can foster but also hinder the regionalisation process. Adler and Barnett (1998, 40) refer to the existence of 'cognitive structures' when trying to refer to this kind of structure. However, these 'cognitive structures' include ideas, values and norms (ideational factors), but do not give meaning to the material world which still has an independent effect on the process. This implies again a distinction between the ideational world i.e. the

²⁷ A simple case against this assumption is the following: would Nigeria's security policy be the same in reaction to a civil war (an objective factor) in Cameroon, a neighbouring state with who relations are tense, than to a civil war in Benin, another neighbour but who belongs together with Nigeria to ECOWAS? The first case would probably result in increasing tension and monitoring of its borders while the second case could lead to a regional intervention in Benin. Nigeria's identity as a member of a West African community would thus mediate the consequence of the civil war in terms of its policy. The civil war as such as no meaning for (and thus no effect on) Nigeria outside of its representations of West Africa which classifies Benin as belonging to its regional community while Cameroon is excluded.

‘cognitive’ and the material world. The concept of discourse structuring the representations of the actors as a structure of knowledge giving meaning to material and ideational factors seems more appropriate to refer to this type of structure to the extent that it does not reproduce this dichotomy.

Adler and Barnett do introduce the concept of discourse in their framework but in the most minimalist way. Its role in the construction of the security community is mostly discarded, which can be seen as problematic in a framework that considers regions as ‘imagined communities’. They have a purely referential view of language: discourses and language are for Adler and Barnett an indicator of the last phase, the mature security community; i.e. it reflects the reality of the emergence of a collective identity. On the one hand, this categorisation leads to an empirical problem as, most of the time, discourses of community can be found at the very beginning of the institutionalisation of a region or of the emergence of a security community. They recognise this contradiction when they admit that ‘Sometimes the language of identity and references to a shared community are uttered during these first moments of cooperation’ (Adler and Barnett 1998, 415). They however prefer to ignore this, arguing that ‘there is no reason to presume that such language and references are anything more than instrumental constructs and contrived conveniences’ (Adler and Barnett 1998, 415). Thus, on the other hand, this raises two problems: first, how do they propose to distinguish between discourses reflecting a ‘real’ collective identity and instrumental discourses? And, more importantly, they do not take into account the performative power of language: through discourses regional actors are building, ‘imagining’ the community, which is why this kind of discourse is present since the beginning of the cooperation between regional actors. Discourses (re)produce and legitimise a particular regional identity. Bially Mattern (2000, 300) rightfully argues

that Adler and Barnett's conceptualisation of collective identity is problematic or 'underestimates the complexity of collective identity.'²⁸ Their conception of identity enables them to maintain this distinction between 'community discourses' as something 'real' indicative of the existence of a 'real' regional identity from a certain stage, and 'instrumental discourses' that are 'false'.

Hence, this performative view of language is also an answer to the preceding question: there is no need to distinguish between these two types of discourse. All discourses are instrumental and strategic as their function is to constitute and legitimise regional practices and, sometimes, competing definitions of the region as will we see in the case of South America in chapter five and six; they are themselves practices used by the actors to build the region. This theoretical standpoint will be further developed in chapter two.

iii Security communities: a teleological and weakly defined research project

A last issue stems from Adler and Barnett analytical framework to empirically study security communities. To some extent, it seems that the concept has been turned into a sort of empty vessel where any region or area engaged in some cooperation could fit. The result has been the proliferation of empirical studies aiming to demonstrate that a particular region is a security community according to some of Adler and Barnett's criteria (see, amongst others, Bah 2005; Pion Berlin 2005; Fuch 2006; Acharya 2009; Franke 2009; Flesmes and Radseck 2012; Weaver 2013). Against this, Nathan (2006, 276-277) insightfully shows that many regions analysed as security

²⁸ This criticism has also been made by Zehfuss (2001, 338) against constructivism in general in her article on 'Constructivism and identity: a dangerous liaison.' She argues that Wendt's 'treatment of identity as something which is attached to and negotiated between pre-existing anthropomorphic actors and which *explains* (or is explained) requires conceptualizing identity as a unitary, circumscribable concept. It makes necessary the identity of identity.' This view of identity which does not enable a conceptualisation of identity as sites of constant contestation and re-articulations has the effect to impede an analysis of identity formation within the states; how they are constructed and articulated through discourse.

communities could not possibly be considered as such because the domestic instability of its member states made 'dependable expectations of peaceful change' very difficult. He argues that Adler and Barnett ignored the fact that domestic stability was for Deutsch a taken-for-granted condition to any kind of integration within a security community. This makes much sense when speaking about regions such as West Africa where while an increasing institutionalisation of security cooperation is taking place (within ECOWAS), it could only very uncomfortably be called a security community. Hence, for Nathan (2006, 277) 'large-scale domestic violence precludes the existence of security communities because it renders people and states deeply insecure; it creates the risk of cross-border destabilization and violence.' This narrowing of the security community definition would already drastically reduce the number of possible security communities.

Moreover, this framework in three stages leading to a 'mature' regional security community – a peaceful and stable area where member states' identities are interchangeable – is somehow teleological and echoes Haas's neo-functionalist project as well as the normative dimension of the NRA. This linearity between the different stages makes the assumption that there is one way between an 'anarchic' inter-state situation and a 'mature' security community which is the wished for situation – even though Adler and Barnett (1998, 57-58) do note that states engaged in this course can also go backwards. In this sense the framework is reductive as it does not take into account the multiplicity of processes, outcomes and situations that can emerge from a regionalisation process without ever having as an endpoint or expectation the stage of 'mature' security community. There is no progressive way from a national identity to a regional interchangeable identity. Identities are constantly changing and (re)produced through the process of regionalisation and the

practices and discourses of actors. They are (re)produced differently in each state depending on their own particular history and experiences, and the articulation they make between nation and region.

Finally, the larger problem might be that Adler and Barnett's object of study is not well defined: with their analytical framework (the three tiers and the three phases) their object of study seems to refer to regional political projects with, at their core, security cooperation; however, as shown by Wiberg (2000) and Browning and Joenniemi (2013), neither a focus on security nor deep intentional institutionalisation is necessary for a security community – defined as a region where people maintain 'dependable expectations of peaceful change' – to develop. So, to the extent that an institutionalised region with dense security cooperation is not necessarily a security community – illustrated by the West African case – the study of regionalisation processes should not merge with the study of security communities as it seems to do in Adler and Barnett's framework.

3. The region-building approach: the discourses and practices of regional actors

In contrast with the RSC and the SC approach, the region-building approach (RBA) was developed by critical geographers in the 1980s and only later introduced into IR by a few scholars. It departs significantly from the previous literature on regional projects: its aim is neither to develop a theory of regional integration, nor to define categories of material and ideational factors causing regionalisation and from which to draw generalisations. Contrarily to the soft constructivism literatures (RSC, SC), the RBA does not essentialise identities or dichotomise the material and ideational world to explain the emergence of regions. It asks instead what is a region, why and how a region is brought into existence, by whom and for what (Neumann 1994, 53;

Paasi 2001, 16). Its main focus is to understand the construction of regions through the discourses and practices of actors.

i Regions as socially constructed, historically contingent processes

The first assumption of the RBA is that regions are socially constructed (Browning 2003, 45, Paasi 2010, 2296). Neumann (1994, 59) explains that the RBA derives from the literature on nation-building which sees nations as ‘imagined communities’, as Benedict Anderson (2006, 4) famously maintained: where political actors in a particular space construct a history, choose and process politically ‘national’ similarities in order to support the construction and reproduction of the nation-state. The RBA also has its roots in the genealogical analysis of social phenomena drawing on Nietzsche and Foucault; it is connected to poststructuralism in its conceptualisation of identity, knowledge and power, as well as in its approach to discourse as performative. Hence, for Neumann (1994, 53)

‘a region is constantly being defined and redefined by its members in a permanent discourse with each member attempting to identify itself at the core of the region. The core is defined in both territorial and functional terms and this definition necessarily involves a manipulation of knowledge and power.’

He criticises the IR literature which tries to explain regions by emphasising either internal or external factors, or a combination of both, therefore ignoring the socially constructed dimension of regions and the central role of political actors/region-builders who are the ones making these factors relevant in order to foster a particular political project. Discourses are thus the vectors through which political actors invest their interests and struggle with each other in order to assert their own definition of the region; making it as natural as possible by giving it social meaning (Neumann

1994, 58; Paasi 2002b, 805). The emphasis on the role of power in region-building is thus an important feature of the RBA.

The insistence on the socially constructed nature of region leads to a view of regions as historically contingent (Neumann 1994, 59; Paasi 2010, 2298). Their study is therefore always a matter of context which gives meaning to the concept and purpose of the region (Ciuta 2008, 122). In the case of Ciuta's (2008) study of the Black Sea region, for instance, the context concerns European security integration which links security politics to region-building and frames the Black sea region's security cooperation. Since for the RBA, region-making can only be understood in its political context it is difficult, as Ciuta (2008, 124) puts it, to apply 'one or another theoretical category to any empirical setting.' In the empirical chapters of this dissertation we will see how the EU regional integration project contributes to frame the regionalisation processes in West Africa and South America by providing a certain meaning to regional integration. Together with the regional context, the international context is indeed crucial in the construction of the regional projects. This becomes even more complex with the assumption of most region-building scholars that the empirical context is also constituted by academic discourses and concepts as will be further explored later. Therefore, this approach clearly stands against the ambition of CIT or the NRA to define a set of material and ideational factors causing regionalisation.

Regional identity is also an important focus of the RBA that tries to grasp its complexity in a more theorised and comprehensive way than the NRA, the RSC and the SC literatures. First, RBA scholars warn against the essentialisation of identity as a natural feature of a space and/or people. They stress the negative effect of such 'taken-for-grantedness' of identities: social exclusion, struggles to defend this

‘natural’ identity, ‘othering’ inside the region and in its relations, etc. (Paasi 2002a, 138). Accordingly, the RBA problematises the link between region and identity by demonstrating ‘how people, “regions” and relations of power come together in diverging social practices and discourses’ (Paasi 2002a, 138). Regional identity is conceptualised as being constructed by the discourse of a whole range of regional actors, politicians, media, scholars, literature, etc., who are struggling to impose their political project by giving it a chronological and spatial existence through identity-building (Neumann 1994, 58; Paasi 2003). These discourses on regional identity produce practices and meanings shaping the reality of the region which, in return, (re)produce and naturalise this regional identity. Hence, Paasi (2002a, 140) argues that the process of the institutionalisation of regions gives rise to, and is conditioned by, the discourses of regional identity through three simultaneous processes of institutionalisation: a territorial shape with the construction of boundaries distinguishing the region and its regional identity from other regions and their regional identities; a symbolic shape where economic, social, cultural, etc., practices are used to construct narratives of identity; a number of institutions in order to maintain the territorial and symbolic shapes.

Agency in the region-building process is thus quite complex: regions are brought into existence in a particular historical context by a large range of discursive, economic, cultural, political, security practices carried out by a multitude of actors struggling to impose their meaning of the region. This focus on the actors’ role and practices in constructing the regions is the core dimension of the RBA which is lacking in the IR literature.

ii The theory/practice link in the building of regions

A characteristic of the RBA is its emphasis on the role of the academic community in the construction of regions. Indeed, many works on region-building in IR highlight the link between theory and practices or, in other words, the influence of academic discourses and concepts on the building of regions (Neumann 1994; Browning 2003; Ciuta 2008). Browning (2003), for instance, argues that in Northern Europe the academic discourse stressing the social construction of regions – and therefore the possibility of their deconstruction and reconstruction – influenced the region-builders of the 1990s who thus tried to reconstitute ‘the area’s geopolitical reality by transcending the self-other divisions between East and West.’ Nevertheless, his study shows that the project of these regional-builders failed as the new narrative they promoted actually reproduced the same exclusion of Russia and the vision of Europe as a ‘civilisational’/superior actor in its relationship with Russia. Browning (2003, 65) stresses here – as poststructuralists would do – that region-builders have been influenced and constrained by the various traditional discursive structures in which they are embedded.²⁹ Therefore, they only managed to reframe the relationship with Russia to a certain extent.

On the other hand, Ciuta (2008) demonstrates in its analysis of the Black Sea region that region-builders use conceptual categories to formulate and legitimise their political and security initiatives, illustrating thereby the interaction between theoretical and political praxis. Indeed, for Ciuta (2008, 123) (as well as for Browning in the previous example) political entrepreneurs use the labelling of regions to reconstitute their regional environment. He speaks of a double hermeneutic³⁰ with an ‘incontestable transfer between concepts of regions/security and politics of

²⁹ This shows the role of the historical and local context in the construction of region.

³⁰ The double hermeneutic is defined by Ciuta (2008, 123) as ‘the mutual interpretative interplay between social sciences and those whose activities compose its subject matter.’

regions/security' (Ciuta 2008, 123). His case study shows how four concepts of region – 'regional security complexes', 'regions as geopolitical entities', 'regions as cultural, historical and geographic unified entities', 'regions as discursively and socially constructed' – associated to two different logics of security (geopolitical and institutional) – inform different political region-building strategies. This emphasis on the theory/practice link is an important reminder that regions are not independent units but they are processes constituted by actors 'inside' and 'outside' the region including the academic community.

iii Region-building and security

The link between region-building and security is also an issue which is central to RBA works in IR. This link between security and region is well demonstrated in Ciuta (2008); as was explained above, he maps the concepts of region associated to different logics of security and traces them to political strategies used by region-builders to 'draw the contour of the region' with the justification of the necessity to deal regionally with the pressing security issues (Ciuta 2008, 121). As Ciuta (2008, 121) rightly puts it:

'One of the most interesting aspects of regional security initiatives is therefore that, while they attempt to inscribe a set of established security practices onto the region's pattern of interaction, these security practices are not expressions of regional specificity, but tools of region-making.'

This will be clearly shown in chapter seven: when confronted with similar transnational security issues, regional actors in West Africa and South America propose different practices informed by different visions of the regional community. Furthermore, in the case of the EU, Ole Wæver (1996) – one of the founders of the Copenhagen School with a poststructuralist affinity – demonstrates how security is tied up with integration and identity. According to him, a particular narrative has been

framing Europe and its integration as the only road to avoid fragmentation and the return to the past wars that already devastated the continent several times: 'integration through a security argument becomes a matter of survival for 'Europe' (Waever 1996, 103). Interestingly, he argues that the connection made between security (with power politics threatening Europe) and the necessity for Europe to build a political or 'security identity' is enabling the transformation of the EU into a foreign policy actor in its own right (Waever 1996, 124). The case studies of South America and West Africa will also show how the security argument conditions the construction of a regional political community.

Therefore, the literature on region-building provides an insightful understanding of the regionalisation process taking into account the discourses and practices of actors 'inside' and 'outside' of the region framing regional community and identity-building. However, it is important to note that this literature mostly studies Europe or sub-regions within Europe while largely neglecting other parts of the world. The study of developing regions would gain from the use of this approach. Indeed, at the moment the NRA, the RSC and the SC – which weaknesses were pointed out in this chapter – are dominant in the concerned academic circles.

Finally, this literature presents two main problems that should be addressed. Firstly, in critical geography RBA scholars have a tendency to focus extensively on agency while forgetting the importance of structures. The discursive and social practices of the actors shaping the region are also historically conditioned as was shown in Browning's (2003) analysis of the Northern European region: regional actors tried to re-frame the region but they were hindered by the traditional discursive structures that they were unaware of. Discursive structures – as structures of meaning constructed through history – limit the field of possibilities of the state's policies and

actions; thus constraining the possible views of the region ‘imagined’ by regional actors and thereby their ‘freedom’ to build the region. These structures should be analysed in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the regionalisation process.

Secondly, the other problem concerns IR region-building scholars who focus extensively on the study of discourses, for example on the interplay between academic and practitioners’ discourses; but at the same time neglect the practice dimension: how do these discourses create the possibility for new social practices to take place and how do these practices (re)produce these discourses and constitute the region? Hence, one of the ambitions of this doctoral thesis’ theoretical chapter will be to provide a framework to analyse the interplay between discursive and social practices in the constitution of the region.

To conclude this section, while the RSC and the SC approaches still provide rather deterministic frameworks emphasising the causal role of material and ideational factors; the RBA offers a theoretical framework which integrates these factors through the study of the discourses and practices of the actors that give meaning to them in order to promote a political project through identity and community building.

III. The role of regional powers in the regionalisation process

The RBA’s emphasis on the role of power in the region-building process where actors struggle to impose their own definition of the region highlights the role of regional powers in the regionalisation process. Whether this issue is ignored such as in the CIT and the NRA, or whether a deterministic causality is implied, such as in the SC

framework or in the literature on hegemony, it has usually been weakly conceptualised. Only recently a literature on regional leadership has emerged questioning and analysing the role of regional powers. The first part of this section will quickly review how the IR literature on regional projects deals with regional powers; while the second part discusses the literature on hegemony and regional leadership.

1. The IR literature on regions: a weak analysis of regional powers

The IR literature reviewed above is in general of little help to conceptualise the role of regional powers in regionalisation processes. On the one hand, neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism, with their aim to provide a comprehensive theory of regional integration, do not differentiate between states according to their status, identity or role in the integration process. States or the sectorial groups driving the states' policy are considered equal, driven by uniform interests/identity and/or equally changing through the integration process. On the other hand, the NRA, with its focus on material and ideational factors cannot engage with the role of regional power except as an objective factor promoting or restricting the regionalisation process, as we will see in more detail in chapter four when comparing the factors of regionalisation in West Africa and South America.

The frameworks developed by the RSC and the SC literatures occasionally have something to say about the role of regional powers. While Buzan and Waever (2003, 65) do not really concern themselves with this question beyond their assumption that 'Regional powers define the polarity of any given RSC', Lake and Morgan (1997), for instance, investigate the formation of regional orders from a regional security complex perspective. According to them, regional security systems are influenced by their structure determined by the distribution of capabilities. They argue that, in a

unipolar system dominated by a regional power, negative security externalities will be more easily managed, and the regional order would produce positive security externalities and thus a more peaceful regional order (Lake 1997, 60; Lake 2009, 36-37). The framework developed by Adler and Barnett (1998) to study 'pluralistic security community' reaches the same conclusion. As we saw, the process described is rather deterministic and teleological: the more states know each other and interact, the more the region becomes institutionalised. Their assumption on regional powers is that power (material and ideational)³¹ can be a magnet and therefore further the process of formation of the security community: weaker states would join the regional power as they seek security, while the latter would develop a common identity and thus foster institutionalisation (Adler and Barnett 1998, 40). In both approaches, the authors trace a direct and empirically dubious link between the superior material and/or ideational power of a state and the existence of a regional project fostering peace. They assume, in a problematic manner, that all regional powers share the same interest regarding their commitment to regionalisation.³² The analysis of the role of Brazil and Nigeria in South America and West Africa in chapter six and seven will show that, while both being clear regional powers with superior material capacities and the ideational authority to determine shared meaning, their policy towards regionalisation is almost opposite – depending on their representations of the region rather than on their material and ideational power.

³¹ The material category of power refers to coercion, while the ideational category concerns 'the authority to determine shared meaning' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 39).

³² This idea that states share the same kind of interest because of their identity as states underlies all positivist approaches in IR including soft constructivism with, for instance, Wendt's (1999, 233-234) argument that states have a 'corporate identity' that generates 'universal "national interests"' about which it is possible to generalize.'

2. Regional leadership as hegemony

IR approaches on hegemony and regional leadership suffer from similar shortcomings: they explain hegemony or leadership as the natural outcome of the superior resources of a state. The Theory of Hegemonic Stability (THS) first put forward in international political economy by Kindleberger (1973) and brought into IR by neorealist scholars such as Gilpin (1981) show how hegemons with superior economic and/or military power pursue their interests through the establishment of the rules of the international (or regional) system in order to create a stable environment for themselves. A deterministic link is asserted between material power and leadership or hegemony (Keohane 1984, 34). Prys (2010, 487-90) and Destradi (2008, 12-13) show how all other major IR approaches, including world-system and neo-gramscian approaches, as well as liberal hegemony theories, share to some extent these assumptions. While some of these approaches understand power in various ways, taking into account its ideational or 'soft' dimension, they do not question the interest of the hegemon or leader to pursue this kind of policy. Indeed, the supposition is, here as well, that regional powers share the same kind of identity, interests and objectives. Some preliminary questions should instead be raised, such as: is a leadership role coherent with the regional power's self-representation? How do the regional powers' constructed interests frame their policy towards the region?

Building on these traditional IR approaches, a more recent literature aims to explain regional leadership in the context of the rise of emerging powers such as China, India and Brazil. They acknowledge the limitations and determinism of the traditional approaches by recognising that regional powers can have various types of behaviour depending, among other things, on their self-perception (Pedersen 2002; Destradi 2008; Flesmes 2010; Prys 2010). However, the dichotomy they maintain

between material and ideational factors, as well as their objective to create typologies of regional powers' strategies still limits an understanding of regional powers policies and a more in-depth answer to the central question: why and in which ways do regional powers constitute regionalisation processes? In Flandes's collective study, for instance, the status of regional power is a social category that still presupposes the corresponding material resources. Most of the authors in this volume argue that material resources are the foundation of the status of regional power which, added to ideational resources, can be translated into leadership (Flandes and Nolte 2010, 6).³³ While agreeing with the distinction between 'regional power' and 'regional leader' into two different social categories, I argue that what distinguish them is the self-representation of the state as one or the other (and the representations of the other states in the region). There are no material resources on the one side, and ideational resources, on the other side; these are deeply intertwined to produce an effect. A state's idea of its power or leadership depends on its understanding of itself including its material resources which have no meaning outside of this self-representation. Theoretical frameworks based on a material/ideational dichotomy tend to provide deterministic claims such as the argument that states with a certain amount of material power have a similar kind of interests and therefore policy.

However, in this collective edition, Nabers (2010, 64) acknowledges the limitations of this dichotomy: he argues in his chapter that both leadership and

³³ Flandes and Nolte (2010, 7) develop a classification to recognise a regional power: it should be part of a geographically delimited region; it should be ready to assume leadership; it should display material and ideational capabilities for regional power projection; and it should be highly influential in regional affairs. Then, but it is not always the case, it should have economic, cultural and political interconnectedness with the other states in the region; it should provide collective goods; an ideational leadership should exist and potential followers should accept this leadership. Flandes and Nolte seem here to merge 'regional power' with 'regional leader'. In this doctoral thesis 'regional power' will refer to the states recognised as the key states in the region without which any project could develop. Conversely, 'regional leader' is another discursive category employed by the regional power concerned and the other states in the region referring to the behaviour of the regional power towards the region and its acceptance to take on the role of the leader.

hegemony are essentially political in character; power which is relational and processual, needs discursive means to be translated into leadership and hegemony but this translation is not automatic inasmuch it is part of a political project. Naber (2010) draws on Lukes' three-dimensional conception of power³⁴ and on Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) conceptualisation of hegemony as a discursive practice to explain that an actor is powerful when other actors' understanding of social relations and the world starts to change according to the framework set by the hegemonic discourse. These hegemonic discourses will be one of the central objects of study of this thesis in order to examine how regional powers in the two regions studied (Brazil and Nigeria) constitute the form and extent of the regionalisation process.

The problem of determinism shows as well in the new classifications of regional power strategies proposed by this literature – classifications based on a series of material and ideational factors defining these categories.³⁵ For instance, Pedersen (2002, 688) argues that to reach co-operative hegemony (one of the possible strategies) a region must not be too asymmetrical or it will tend to alienate smaller states and push the regional power to achieve its power-security goals without the need for regional institutions. The underlying assumption of this claim is that a direct causal link exists between the material power of the state and its policy towards regionalisation. This classification ignores how the construction of the regional power's security interests mediates the use of its material power. Here material and

³⁴ In his analysis of power, Lukes (2005) pleads for going beyond a 'one-dimensional' view of power which concerns situations when A can or does succeed in affecting what B does at the moment a decision is made during an observable conflict (Lukes 2005, 19); but also beyond a 'two-dimensional' view which refers to 'the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken on potential issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests' (Lukes 2005, 25); by looking at a 'three-dimensional' view where 'A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants' (Lukes 2005, 27).

³⁵ See, for instance, Prys (2010, 483). Prys classifies regional powers in three ideal-type variants: regional detached powers, regional hegemons, and regional dominators; or Destradi (2008, 6). Destradi elaborates a typology including hegemony (hard, intermediate, and soft), leadership (leader-initiated, follower-initiated), and empire.

ideational factors cannot be separated as will be clearly shown with the comparative study of Brazil and Nigeria. Indeed, even though the position of Nigeria towards the region is as, and maybe even more, asymmetrical than Brazil, it still promotes the institutionalisation of the region while Brazil is extremely reluctant to do so.

Finally, scholars working on regional leadership largely ignore the fact that regional power or leadership are also social categories in the sense that they relate to the concept of region which carries a particular social meaning. Cooperation within the region raises higher expectations than cooperation at the international level because of its connection with discourses of community and identity. Regional integration – drawing on the EU model – also entails some degree of commitment and of delegation of sovereignty that goes beyond simple coalition building and can threaten the principle of state sovereignty, even though intergovernmentalism is the main decision-making procedure. Regional leaders are therefore expected to have somehow a different behaviour than a hegemon in the theory of hegemonic stability, less ‘selfish’ and more prone to abide by regionally negotiated rules and norms. This can have an impact on regional powers, which can make them reluctant to engage in a regionalisation process, as we will see with Brazil.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter demonstrated the shortcomings of the IR literature on regions, and more particularly on regions and security. On the one hand, Classical Integration Theory tries to elaborate a comprehensive theory of regional integration presenting states as like units with uniform identity and interests. The emphasis of the New Regionalism Approach is on finding material and ideational factors that enable generalisations through the establishment of causal links between these factors, on the

one side, and regionalisation or regional integration as the dependent variables on the other side. These approaches, as well as contemporary EU studies, are rather limited as they only take into account material and ideational factors, and/or uniform identities and interests that condition this process, thereby missing the context of each region and the way ideational and material factors are intertwined and produce particular outcomes; contingency, agency and the representations of the relevant actors are thus obscured.

On the other hand, the Regional Security Complex Theory and the Security Community literatures, while using a soft constructivist framework, are still problematic to the extent that they maintain this dichotomy between material and ideational factors. This leads to a simplistic and essentialised conceptualisation of identity as an independent or a dependent variable, instead of a site of struggle for the actors trying to assert their own meaning of the region and its identity. In the end, they continue to define the region as the outcome of a set of objective and ideational factors and ignore the historical and international context; with a strong teleological dimension in the case of the SC literature.

Finally, the focus of the RBA on power relations in the region-building process leads to an engagement with the analysis of the role of regional powers. This role is weakly conceptualised by the IR literature on regions, hegemony and regional leadership. The claim that material and ideational power is at the basis of the status of regional power, and the aim to find categories of regional powers and their behaviour, leads to deterministic assumptions about their policy preferences. While a regional power will have an impact on the regionalisation process, this impact will depend on their self-representation and on their representation of the region.

Hence, these problems of the IR literature hinder a thorough understanding of regionalisation. Instead, a focus on the actors' discourses and practices would bring back in both the study of processes and the role of the relevant actors situated 'inside' and 'outside' of the region. This has been the emphasis of the Region-Building Approach. The next chapter elaborating the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis builds on the RBA while addressing its limits.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework: A discursive and practices approach to regionalisation

Introduction

The theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis draws on four main, and closely-related, theoretical approaches: the region-building approach, a poststructuralist conception of foreign policy and identity, the ‘practice turn’ in IR, and securitisation theory. They share an anti-foundationalist ontology, and a discursive or constructivist epistemology; as well as a focus on the discursive and social practices which are seen as constituting social phenomena. In other words, and as well put by Adler and Pouliot (2011, 15), they share the perspective that ‘practices not only organize the world – they are also the raw material that comprise it.’

These approaches complement each other in the following way: on the one side, while a poststructuralist view of discourse as co-constituting foreign policy and identity is central to this research, it neglects to take into account how social practices diffuse and (re)produce the discourse and the identities it carries, thereby also potentially transforming the dominant discourse. The ‘practice turn’ in IR enables a shift of focus towards social practices and what actors actually do.

On the other side, the region-building literature focuses specifically on the constitution of regions and brings together these elements with its concern with the discourses and practices of actors situated ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the region. For Paasi (2009b, 131), ‘Region is a complicated category since it brings together both material and “virtual” elements, as well as very diverging social practices and discourses.’ Once regions are established ‘they are then reproduced in discourses and social practices’ (Paasi 2009b, 136). However, we saw in the first chapter that the RBA

insists on the agency of region-builders while leaving aside the role of structure – a dimension that is emphasised by poststructuralists.

Finally, the securitisation approach brings our attention to the security practices of the actors constituting the region, which is a core element of the process of regionalisation studied here in light of its connection to the emergence of a regional political community.

The first section of this chapter clarifies the link between foreign and security policies, identities and discourses drawing on the poststructuralist concept of the performativity of discourse; while the second section provides a theoretical conceptualisation of the regionalisation process through the interplay between discursive and social practices.

I. Foreign and Security Policies, Identities and Discourses

This section discusses the link between foreign policy, identity and discourse before further explaining, in the second part, the concept of performativity of discourse. It finishes by examining the construction of identities as a discursive, political, relational and social process.

1. The co-constitution of foreign policy and identity through discourse

The theoretical framework of this dissertation draws on Hansen's (2006, xvii) poststructuralist claim that foreign policy and identity are co-constituted through discourse. Discourse is the key element, the analysis of which enables us to understand how foreign policy emerges and becomes legitimated. Other poststructuralist frameworks such as Ole Wæver's (2002, 20, 26-27) analysis of Nordic states' foreign policies towards European integration even present discourse analysis as a foreign policy theory with the aim to explain and predict, to some extent,

foreign policy. Discursive structures are presented as stable enough to ‘cause’ foreign policy by restricting it to particular options. However, this doctoral thesis will not try to predict the foreign policy choices of states in West Africa and South America; its ambition is to understand how and why practices of regionalisation of foreign and security policies are emerging in the two regions, and their link with the constitution of a regional identity and community. The emphasis of Hansen (2006) on the co-constitution of foreign policy and identity through discourses seems more appropriate to this project. She argues that foreign policies are legitimised as necessary through references to identity, while these identities are simultaneously constituted and (re)produced through the formulation of foreign policy: ‘To theorize foreign policy as discourse is to argue that identity and policy are constituted through a process of narrative adjustment’ (Hansen 2006, xvii).

Whereas Waever’s framework is somehow more structuralist with an exclusively focus on the different layers of discursive structures with the aim to predict, and is therefore more static³⁶; Hansen’s process of narrative adjustment – which will be further explained – allows more easily to conceptualise how new facts or events are constituted and integrated within discourse, thereby opening the possibility for its transformation. This conceptualisation of foreign policy and identity as co-constituted through discourse also enables the introduction of another element that is missing in most poststructuralist analyses of foreign policy: social practices.³⁷ Foreign and security policy and identity are thus co-constituted through discursive and social

³⁶ It is more rigid inasmuch as Waever’s framework conceptualises a system based on layered discursive structures where change can happen at one layer level, but the system as a whole remains the same. However, Waever (2001, 31) notes that ‘Since we do not make the Lévi-Straussian assumption of an over-arching structural logic, our systems are all contingent, and it is – and should be – possible to imagine a change beyond the system. In that case, we can say very little of how things would look.’

³⁷ Hansen does not herself introduce the study of social practice but her understanding of discourse as practice leaves the space open for the analysis of practices in general.

practices. This distinction has a heuristic use to facilitate the empirical analysis and not restrict the analysis of foreign policy to written discourse. Discursive practices include here speech and text-based statements; while social practices concern all other types of practices, such a development aid programme or regional cooperation. However, as will be further explained in this chapter both sorts of practices are ontologically discursive.

Poststructuralism also argues for the impossibility of separating material and ideational factors, in opposition to the dichotomy imposed by most IR theories (as was seen in the first chapter) which weigh these factors against each other (Hansen 2006, 1); with the consequence, as Wæver (2002, 22) puts it, ‘to explain only part of the world of international politics.’ Indeed, ‘reality’ is more complicated: material and ideational factors do not have an independent effect; they interact with each other in complex ways to produce particular outcomes. For poststructuralists, ideas and materiality are integrated and mediated by discourses which are structures of meaning that are historically constructed; these discursive structures are the ones giving meaning and effect to these factors. Hence, Hansen’s (2006, 19) assertion that ‘neither ideas nor materiality have a meaningful presence separate from each other, the point is to study how material facts are produced and prioritized.’ Against the argument that discourses are mere ideational factors Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 108) stress ‘the material character of every discursive structure’ where ‘the linguistic and non linguistic elements are not merely juxtaposed, but constitute a differential and structured system of position – that is, a discourse. The differential position includes, (...), a dispersion of very diverse material elements.’ One of the aims of this research is therefore to understand how particular events and factors are produced and framed

by discourses in such ways that they give rise to practices of regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

2. The performativity of discourse

More generally, poststructuralism conceptualises language as performative, in the sense that it gives meaning to ‘reality’, to things around us and guides our responses, behaviour and reactions towards those things. Only through language are things, objects and subjects given an identity (Hansen 2006, 17-18). Therefore, language constitutes our ‘reality’, it ‘is constitutive of objects and experience’ (Shapiro 1981, 20). This stance goes against a referential view of language which sees it as simply referring to ‘reality’, to ‘real’ things or about political phenomena, instead of constituting them (Shapiro 1981, 5). From this standpoint language is a passive tool and not an activity (Shapiro 1981, 59). For instance, in the previous chapter we saw that this was the case of the Security Community literature, which analyses community discourse as merely reflecting the emergence of a regional identity. Hence, to put the study of language and discourse at the centre of one’s analysis ‘is to recognize (...) that any “reality” is mediated by a mode of representation and, second, that representations are not descriptions of a world of facticity, but are ways of making facticity’ (Shapiro 1989, 13-14).

According to Waeber (2002, 23-24), the acknowledgment of this role of language is what eventually differentiates poststructuralism from mainstream constructivism: while constructivists have a referential conception of language as a way to represent external reality, poststructuralists see it as a system of meaning. It is this system of meaning which ‘organize knowledge systematically, and this delimits what can be

said and what not' (Waeber 2002, 29).³⁸ Language sets up the preconditions for human action, it opens the possibility for practices to take place, and in this sense all practices are in fact ontologically discursive. However, it is important to note, as Shapiro (1981, 20) warns, that:

‘This is not the subjective position that there is nothing (no things) in the world until we cognize it or speak it. Rather it is the position that the world of “things” has no meaningful structures except in connection with the standards we employ.’

In this sense, materiality, ‘brute facts’ have an effect on us and are important, however the meaning we will attribute them and which will guide our behaviour, actions and practices is constituted by language.

As a system of meaning, language is social, it does not belong to one person. It should ‘be regarded as complex, rule-governed utterances that rely on implicit norms or standards delimiting what we consider as normal, possible, therefore shaping our material reality’ (Shapiro 1981, 20). It is these ‘stock of signs’ constituting our culture that makes things, such as public policy, intelligible to us (Gregory 1989, xx). Social and political phenomena and the relations between them thus emerge as a result of rules or principles of exclusion regulated by our political culture, our ‘stock of signs’: ‘These principles provide the content of a language by controlling what aspects of experience are to be regarded as identical or parts of the same whole and what aspects are to be regarded as distinct’ (Shapiro 1981, 23). Language is thus made of norms, concepts and conventions that structure the political culture of our society and frame the discursive practices of agents. The consequence for human

³⁸ Zehfuss (2002, p. 10) also makes this distinction between constructivisms and postmodern analyses: ‘when their constructivist analysis starts, some reality has already been made and is taken as given. Constructivist work stresses the significance of meaning but assumes, at the same time, the existence of an *a priori* reality. This place is, intentionally or not, in a middle-ground position which is problematic but central to constructivism.’ This assumption of an *a priori* reality can be avoided with a discursive ontology and epistemology.

action is that while human agency is important to (re)produce these structures, individual intentionality is limited. Shapiro (1981, 117) highlights this in a clear manner:

‘People often do things because they want to and thus we can often understand much that they do by paying attention to their hopes and plans. But human “action” as the expression is ordinarily understood (by philosophers and social scientists), involves more than what individual actors try to do and think they are doing. A person who performs something usually has limited control over what that something is or will become.’

This restriction of individual intentionality is rarely acknowledged by IR literatures such as the securitisation-focused approaches that were reviewed in chapter one (RSCT, EU security governance) which emphasise the autonomy of the actors to securitise particular issues. Moreover, the assumption is that while individual beliefs are not unimportant, what matters to understand social phenomena is to analyse precisely how these beliefs are constituted in a particular political culture. Accordingly, poststructuralism does not consider individual beliefs as a valid object of study because it concerns itself with the codes and norms used by actors to relate to each other which are not the individual properties of people (Waever 2002, 26-27).³⁹

However, it does give importance to the activities and practices of actors: while the norms and conventions constituting the structures of language are preconditions for our action; actors’ practices also (re)produce these norms and conventions and have the potential to change them. Shapiro (1981, 125), drawing on Foucault, explains that ‘Although what persons are and what they can do is, to a large extent, preinstitutionalized, the norms and standards that creates roles for persons and

³⁹ Waever (2002, 26) also notes that getting into people’s heads to analyse what they believe is perilously difficult. Discourse analysis therefore sidesteps this issue.

produce what are understood as person's actions are always in the process of development.' He insists on the fact that we should not assume that all social behaviour is regulated by a pre-existing set of rules. Members of a society, through their activities, negotiate their social order to a certain extent.

Nevertheless, even though the importance of practices (discursive and social) is usually recognised, IR poststructuralist scholars have not really taken them as objects of study, favouring instead the study of discursive structures through purely text-based analysis (Neumann 2002, 627). They are thus very much on the structure side of the structure agency debate. By taking practices seriously, the agency of actors is much more taken into account in the analysis.

As noted above, language is, in poststructuralist thought, a relational system of meaning. Indeed, most poststructuralist scholars have a differential view of language where 'meaning is located in the differences among concepts' (Waeber 2002, 29). However, more than difference, they have stressed – in line with Derrida's deconstructivist approach – antagonism by underlining the opposition between terms (Hansen 2006, 19):

'Not merely differentiated and set in opposition to each other, the terms are also differently weighted, one having more power than the other. (...) The denigrated term essentially functions to highlight the other term's significance; its formal function is to signify, or identify, the dominant term, which as it were, draws a boundary around itself and declares: "This I am, and not That," "That," outside the boundary, is the Other, the not-self, upon which "This" depends for its identity.' (Gregory 1989, xv-xvi)

Contesting this view Gregory emphasises the fact that this antagonism derives from the 'logocentric procedure'⁴⁰ dominating the construction of meaning in Western thought, and therefore is culturally contingent. Instead, 'What a deconstructive analysis leaves in place is a confirmation that the "meaning" of a term or concept

⁴⁰ The 'logocentric procedure' consists in the 'structuring of paired concepts as inevitably opposed and as opposed in a zero sum relation' (Gregory 1989, xvi).

comes into being only relative to at least one other term' (Gregory 1989, xvi). Accordingly, this other term does not have to be its opposite and neither the only term giving it meaning; the first concept can be given meaning by a more complex system of differentiation. We will see how this conceptualisation of language as a complex system of differentiation enables a more thorough understanding of the construction of identities.

Moreover, the norms and conventions ruling language are constituted by principles of inclusion/exclusion stating what a thing is and what it is not, legitimising knowledge and identities; and in this way framing our actions and constructing political and social phenomena. Language is therefore inherently political: 'To inquire into our language is thus to inquire into the meaning of our conduct, and, to the extent that we focus on the controls allocated and legitimized in language and speech, that inquiry into meaning is manifestly political' (Shapiro 1981, 25). The focus of a poststructuralist analysis is thus on discursive practices, highlighting the productive nature of language which produces not only objects but also (political) subjects:

'the meaning of statements and of the discourses in which they are deployed create positions for persons. Because of this, the analysis of the development of various discourses is, at the same time, the analysis of the development of various social, political, economic, and administrative institutions and processes in the society in which these discourses occur. The discourses are, in effect, 'practices' precisely because they reflect and guide relationships among persons.' (Shapiro 1981, 151)

The production of political subjects is one of the core objects of analysis of this dissertation which will look at if, and how, the regional organisations are developing an agency as regional political actors – a key indicator of the emergence of a regional political community.

Looking at discursive practices in a society to study a political phenomenon means therefore looking at contesting or even opposing discursive practices trying to provide for alternative understandings of things, facts or events in order to gain legitimacy and control over the political process. A dimension of power is always present here (Der Derian 1989, 4). Hence, for Shapiro (1989, 13) 'It is the dominant, surviving textual practices that give rise to the systems of meaning and value from which actions and policies are directed and legitimated.' Conversely, the contesting discourses will challenge the dominant discourses and the policies and identities that they legitimise (Hansen 2006, 32-33).

The literature on region-building, reviewed in chapter one, demonstrates well enough this element of power intrinsic to the discursive practices of political actors and at the heart of the construction of regions. Hence, for Paasi (2009a, 468) 'In practice, discussions on the identity of some regions are typically discourses of scientists, politicians, administrators' and so on. These discourses are 'based on certain choices, where some elements are chosen to constitute an identity narrative and some others are excluded. Thus they are expressions of power in delimiting, naming, symbolizing space and groups of people.' This struggle is illustrated in this research with discourses which legitimise the regionalisation of foreign and security policies by providing an understanding of the regional identity and of current events as requiring this transformation from the national to the regional level; whereas competing discourses oppose it, for instance, because it threatens their representation of national identity. Chapters five, six and seven will clearly show how this competition plays in the case of South America.

Moreover, as mentioned in the first chapter, this acknowledgment of the importance of power also pleads for giving analytical attention to the states

constituted as regional powers or leaders.⁴¹ These discursive categories give these states a particular power to frame the dynamic and form of the regional projects. I therefore take on board Waever's (2002, 26) argument that if the articulation between the concepts of state and region in the leading countries comes under stress, the whole regional project may be in danger.

3. Identity building as a discursive, political, relational and social process

The theoretical framework of this research drawing on poststructuralism allows for a non-essentialist approach of identity where identities are not objectified and given but produced, diffused and (re)negotiated continuously through discourses and social practices. In parallel, identities constitute policies by legitimising them, as policies need to be justified in terms of a particular Self for which they are useful or necessary. This view of identity provides a further differentiation from mainstream IR approaches on regional projects, including the constructivist literatures such as the RSC or SC approaches where identities are analysed as causing the regionalisation process or as one of its outcome as we saw in the first chapter which highlighted this problem. In this framework, on the contrary, identities are processed and intertwined with material factors through discourses to have an effect on the regionalisation process. As Waever (2002, 22) puts it 'it is necessary to have a view of identity that is both more structured and more unstable': more structured because discursive structures constrain the possible forms an identity can take; as well as more unstable because there is no given essential identity.

Hansen's (2006, 5) conceptualisation of identity as discursive, political, relational and social allows for a more complex understanding of identity than the one

⁴¹ I refer to Brazil and Nigeria as the regional powers in South America and West Africa – a social status consensually agreed on by actors at the regional and international level, while the empirical chapters analyse how and if they see themselves as regional leaders, and with which consequences for the regionalisation process.

commonly found in IR theories. As stated earlier, identities are discursive as they are shaped, negotiated and contested by competing discourses. They are political because they are not given and essential; this goes against a view of identity as culture, as the attribute of a particular ‘nation’ or ‘people’, about who they are and how they live (Paasi 2009b, 133; Paasi 2011, 14; Wæver 2002, 24-25); it goes also against the attribution of a fixed identity to a political entity such as the ‘corporate identity’ of state identified by Wendt (1999).⁴² This is well demonstrated by the literature on nation-building and on region-building which show that the identity of a nation or a region is not a given attribute of these entities but a political process (Neumann 1994, 59). For example, Anderson (2006, 4) conceptualises nations as ‘imagined communities’ where ‘nationality, or, (...) nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind’ which creation was ‘the spontaneous distillation of a complex “crossing” of discrete historical forces’; but once created became ‘capable of being transplanted, with varying degree of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations.’ Hence, the empirical chapters of this dissertation will show how national and regional identities are processed and asserted by actors trying to foster their political project for the region. Far from being natural, they can be interpreted in different ways according to the form and content sought for the regional project.

Identities are social because they are ‘established through a set of collectively articulated codes’ (Hansen 2006, 5). For Wæver (2002, 30) ‘in a specific political culture there are certain basic concepts, figures narratives and codes, and only on the

⁴² According to Wendt (1999, 233-234), ‘states share essential properties in virtue of their corporate identity as states, and I now want to suggest that these generate universal “national interests” about which it is possible to generalize. As a function of corporate identity these interests are intrinsic to states;’

basis of these codes are interests constructed and transformed into policy.’ As stated previously, these codes are embedded within language which is the structure of meaning constituting our political culture; the (re)production of identity has to engage with them to be accepted and thereby constitute interests.

Lastly, an identity is relational to the extent that it is always constructed through reference to something it is not: ‘Meaning and identity are always the consequence of a relationship between the Self and the Other that emerges through the imposition of an interpretation, rather than being the product of uncovering an exclusive domain with its own preestablished identity’ (Campbell 1992, 23). For Campbell (1992, 60), the strategies of otherness giving rise to identities in a historically specific and spatially defined location are what make foreign policy possible.⁴³ Logically, the constitution of the state’s national identity is inseparable from the elaboration of its foreign policy and is thus a political practice in itself (Hansen 2006, 60). This conceptualisation of identity and foreign policy has consequences for the study of political communities other than states as it implies that the creation of a new kind of political community goes hand in hand with how it relates to the exterior, with what is ‘foreign’ (Campbell 1992, 61). Therefore, foreign and security policies regionalisation would be political practices making collectively ‘foreign’ various events, issues and actors; and at the same time constituting a regional identity. Buzan and Waever (2003, 57), for instance, point to these kinds of political practices when they refer to the collective securitisation of threats. Nevertheless, while most poststructuralist research in IR focuses on the existence of a threatening Other

⁴³ Campbell (1992, 37) insightfully highlights that what we should regard as surprising is how we ‘came to understand foreign policy as the external deployment of instrumental reason on behalf of an unproblematic internal identity situated in an anarchic realm of necessity.’

defining the identity of the Self (Campbell 1992; Walker 1993),⁴⁴ it should be stressed that this view of Self/Other relations can be reductive; even though in some instances national foreign policies are based of this antagonism. This is so as:

‘in the context of foreign policy, it is easier for the logic of identity to succumb to the politics of negation and otherness because foreign policy is concerned with the reproduction of an unstable identity at the level of the state and the containment of challenges to that identity is more often than not efficient through the representation of danger’ (Campbell 1992, 71).

In the case of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies, it appears that this Othering is a common practice that can be used by politicians in the region to legitimise their proposed form of regionalisation. In the case of the existence of a threatening Other, the Other does not have to be a another state, it can be a criminal, political or ethnic group, transnational security issues, or even the past history of the Self as Waever (1996) has demonstrated in the case of the EU where the threatening Other refers to its own history of wars and rivalry which can only be avoided through regional integration. This is a core argument of the RSCT and the SC literatures where regional security issues are depicted as furthering regional cooperation (Lake and Morgan 1997; Adler and Barnett 1998; Buzan and Waever 2003). Nevertheless, it is not always that simple, the Other used in the articulation of identity, does not have to be its only source of meaning nor has it to be threatening as in Campbell’s (1992) study of US foreign policy.

Firstly, identities are multidimensional and multilayered. According to Waever (2002, 24-25) ‘The analysis is thus focused not simply on “who” we are, but on the

⁴⁴ In his study of the United States ‘foreign Policy’, Campbell (1992, 68) asserts that ‘For the state, identity can be understood as the outcome of exclusionary practices in which resistant elements to a secure identity on the “inside” are linked through a discourse of “danger” with threats identified/located on the “outside”.’ Walker (1993, 151) argues similarly that ‘Defense policy is usually understood in relation to the securing of boundaries from external threat. It is at least as important to understand it as practices intended to inscribe the boundaries of “normal” politics, a patrolling of the borders at home, a disciplining of claims to sovereign authority and national identity within.’

way(s) one conceives this “we” through the articulation of different layers of identity in complex constellations of competition and mutual definition.’ In the case of regional projects, member states have not only a national but also a regional layer of identity referring to how they conceive of themselves within the region; these layers can support each other but there can be tensions or opposition as well (Wæver 2002, 37-38). Identities are multidimensional as they are not only articulated through reference to a single Other but in a complex system of differences in reference to various others and concepts (Campbell 1992, 74; Wæver 2002, 24, Hansen 2006): ‘most identity will need complex, multidimensional systems to make sense, and differences only collapse into opposition in “special situations”’ (Wæver 2002, 24). The Self can therefore be articulated with different but ‘friendly,’ ‘similar,’ ‘exotic,’ etc., others; ‘different degrees of “Otherness” exist from fundamental difference to construction of less than radical difference’ (Hansen 2006, 5).

This complexity of identity, not reductive to either a cultural or taken-for-granted identity, or a Self/Other antagonism, is crucial for the study of regionalisation and of the potential construction of regional political communities. Indeed, what matters is to understand in which system of differences is the regional ‘us’ constructed; what part does the definition of an Other or different others play? Could the definition of regional neighbours as ‘friendly’, or ‘similar to us’, be enough to construct a regional community? While the process of Othering seems to have been central for the construction of the state – as demonstrated by Campbell (1992) and Walker (1993) – does it have to be the same for the construction of a regional political community? Also, does a process of Othering automatically lead to this path? If states are the key actors (but not the only) of this construction, we should admit the possibility that the concepts and codes which constitute their discourses and practices will frame and/or

constrain greatly the building of regional projects. Hence, we will see in the analysis of the relevant actors' discourses that, beyond a simple reference to a significant and threatening Other, regional identities are constructed through references to several concepts such as state, sovereignty, region, development, etc., in a complex system of articulations.

II. The regionalisation of foreign and security policies through practices

This section first discusses the importance and definition of practice as well as its use in the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. The second part explores the different categories of practices at play in the regionalisation of foreign and security policies; while the last part focuses in particular on the practices of actors that are 'external' to the region.

1. Why a focus on practices?

The discursive epistemology of this theoretical framework places language and practices as the key objects of analysis.⁴⁵ Discursive structures⁴⁶ establish the preconditions for action, make facts and events meaningful as well as attribute identity(ies) to subjects and objects. However, as mentioned previously, the study of a social/political phenomenon should not be restricted to discursive practices as this limits the empirical understanding of how discourses – the meanings and identities they carry – are translated into action and policy, diffused in society and (re)produced. I argue with Pouliot (2008, 279) that 'without practice there cannot be any social reality.' The analysis of discursive and social practices produced by the

⁴⁵ We already saw the distinction made between discursive and social practices, which are both ontologically discursive. While language is the general structure of meaning (discursive structures), the term discourse is used here as a heuristic device to categorise the main representations of the actors.

⁴⁶ Discursive structures refer to the general structures of meaning in language that constitute the discursive and social practices of the actors.

discursive structures framing the regionalisation of foreign and security policies is key to understand how the form taken by these policies is being naturalised, taken-for-granted and/or transformed. This interplay between discourses and practices brings together the stance of poststructuralist scholars such as Ole Wæver (2002, 29) who advocates an exclusive focus on discursive structures and the bracketing of what people ‘really’ think, with the stance of scholars promoting a ‘practice turn’ in IR stressing that ‘practice theory deemphasizes what is going on in people’s heads – what they think – to instead focus on what it is they do’ (Pouliot 2008, 274). Swidler (2001, 85) illustrates well how these two levels of analysis complement each other:

‘Practice theory moves the level of sociological attention “down” from conscious ideas and values to the physical and the habitual. But this move is complemented by a move “up”, from ideas located in individual consciousness to the impersonal arena of “discourse.” A focus on discourses, or on ‘semiotic codes’ permits attention to meaning without having to focus on whether particular actors believe, think, or act on any specific ideas. Like language, discourse is conceived to be the impersonal medium through which (with which) thought occurs. (...) A focus on discourse then reintroduces the world of language, symbols, and meanings without making them anyone-in-particular’s meanings. Rather the semiotic system is the set of interrelated meanings that constitutes a cultural system. (...) discourse is not the content of what anyone says, but the system of meanings that allows them to say anything meaningful at all.’

Why is this interplay so important? One the one hand, the poststructuralist focus on discourse is essential as language opens the mere possibility of human action and therefore of the elaboration of policies. As was noted at the start of the chapter, even though social practices are not spoken or written, they only have meaning through language as a system of meaning which constitutes the preconditions for their emergence. On the other hand, discursive structures do not determine the behaviour of individuals; while constrained to a certain extent by them, individuals have some room of manoeuvre to engage in a range of different actions, and thereby also

contribute to (re)produce and transform these discursive structures. Practices can take various forms depending on the political, social and material context where the actors find themselves. Some contingency thus exists concerning how discursive structures frame practices.

This ‘turn to practice’ has the advantage to enable a ‘superior formulation of the agent-structure conundrum, where agency and structure jointly constitute and enable practices’ (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 16; see also Swidler 2001, 88); ‘Practices (...) are not merely descriptive “arrows” that connect structure to agency and back, but rather the dynamic material and ideational processes that enable structures to be stable or to evolve, and agents to reproduce or transform structure (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 5). The study of this interplay leads to an analysis which is more dynamic and sensitive to change than a classical IR poststructuralist analysis focusing exclusively on narratives and discourses. Neumann (2002, 627-628) rightly observes that:

‘especially in IR we have to remind ourselves that the linguistic turn and the turn to discourse analysis involved from the beginning a turn to practices. For IR this means the linguistic turn is not just a turn to narrative discourse and rhetoric, but to how politics is actually effected. The analysis of discourse understood as the study of the preconditions for social action must include the analysis of practice understood as the study of social action itself.’

This doctoral thesis thus aims at examining this interplay through the analysis of the formulation of regionalised foreign and security policies in the following way: first factors initiating change emerge from the material, social or political context; these factors have to be constituted as new events and facts through their integration within the current discursive structures in order to be given meaning and thus make sense for the actors. The discursive structures have to be adapted to cope with this new political and/or material environment and formulate new foreign and security policy options based on a particular understanding of the national and/or regional

identity defining the interests at stake. Preconditions for action are now established: the discursive practices have named the phenomenon, defined new objects and/or subjects as well as orientations for action. The form the action takes then depends on the social and political context, and on the practices already at play in this policy area (Neumann 2002, 636). The new action⁴⁷ takes a particular form altering the situation and is thus in need of a discourse to define and legitimise it:

‘as the new practice is institutionalised in the sense of becoming a regular aspect of the social, it is also naturalized. As a naturalized social force, it authorises its own stories of what things should be like, thereby entrenching its authority. The practice speaks: “this is how we have always done things around here”.’ (Neumann 2002, 636-637)

This interplay is somehow similar to the process of narrative adjustment between policy and identity theorised by Hansen (2006, xvii); in this case, however, it integrates social practices and focuses also on the interplay between discursive structures (carrying identities) and practices (enacting policies on the basis of these identities). Hence, this model is dynamic and change-sensitive as change can happen on two different tracks: at the level of discursive structures and therefore leading to new practices; at the level of practices requiring a modification of the discourse(s) in place to legitimise them.

Power is at play both at the level of discursive and social practices. At the level of discursive practices, we have seen that actors are struggling to impose their own reading of the events and facts in order to legitimise the policy they advocate for the region. At the level of social practice, power is at play inasmuch as to be legitimised as practices, actions have to establish themselves within a set of already established

⁴⁷ Adler and Pouliot (2011, 5) differentiate actions from practices in this way ‘Action is specific and located in time; practices are generally classes of action, which, although situated in a social context, are not limited to any specific enacting.’ Moreover, ‘practice tends to be patterned, in that it generally exhibits certain regularities over time and space’ (...). As a general rule, (...), iteration is a key characteristic of practices – and the condition of possibility for their social existence’ (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 6).

practices, disturbing how things work ‘normally’: ‘Practices answer to a regularity and inertia which serves to maintain power relations. This means that actions to innovate will be met with counter-actions to resist change and hold intact the existing set of preconditions for practice’ (Neumann 2002, 641). In the South American case we will see how new security practices emerging to deal with transnational security issues are met with resistance from part of the diplomatic and military staff. Hence, the transformation of actions into practices that are natural and taken-for granted is the key step for the naturalisation of the identity and the (re)production of the discourse(s) on which they are based. The reiteration of these actions says: this is what we are and this is how it should be and how it has always been. In West Africa, for example, diplomatic consultation between ECOWAS member states became so natural that they turned into an automatic reflex to take any decision concerning regional security. This established practice contributes to the constitution of a regional identity by giving a sense of a regional ‘we’ to the actors.

The concept of practice should be further specified. Indeed, practices can be conceptualised in many ways. According to Schatzki (2001, 11):

‘there is no unified practice approach. Most thinkers who theorize practices conceive of them, minimally, as arrays of activity. Not only, however, do their conception of activity and what connect the activities vary, but some theorists define practices as the skills, or tacit knowledge and presuppositions, that underpin activities (...).’

My understanding of practice shares similarities, but also contrasts with, Pouliot’s definition of practice, which in turn is based on Pierre Bourdieu’s ‘logic of practice’ – as is an important part of the ‘turn to practice’ literature in IR (See Bigo and Walker 2007; Adler-Nissen 2011). Pouliot differentiates practice from taken-for-granted knowledge that is, according to him, reflected upon before being internalised: ‘The core *modus operandi* that defines practice is transmitted through practice, in practice,

without acceding to the discursive level' (Bourdieu quoted in Pouliot 2008, 273). Practices are thus non discursive and involve a particular kind of knowledge: 'Inarticulate, concrete, and local, practical knowledge is learned from experience and can hardly be expressed apart from practice' (Pouliot 2008, 273).

In my view, however, this differentiation between practice and taken-for-granted knowledge is difficult to maintain. Language also sets the preconditions for this 'practical knowledge'; even this type of knowledge is embedded in a world and use 'things' that have to be defined by language to make sense to us. All practices are thus ontologically discursive. The Bourdieusian stance has some difficulty to account for the apparition of a new practice as it rejects any reflexivity.⁴⁸ Indeed, when actions take place for the first time, and until the moment they become practices, they are reflexive inasmuch as they are not natural and to the extent that they disturb other practices and actors. They must find their place within the context. So, while practical knowledge can be learned from experience it can also be reflected upon. Neumann's (2002, 637-638) definition reflects more accurately my understanding of practice:

'practices are integrative inasmuch as they nudge human beings into relationships be they of amity or enmity. We should remember that practices are improvisational, inasmuch as they play themselves out in particular situations for which humans may only be partially prepared. They are reflective, inasmuch as they have to relate to the actions of other actors (...). They are quotidian, in the sense that they play themselves out every day, often in seemingly trivial ways, and are part of everybody's lives. They are performative – they are (also) their use – and they are stylized.'

⁴⁸ While this Bourdieusian view of practice is dominant in IR, in a later article however, Pouliot together with Adler revise to some extent his conception of practice by re-emphasising the role of discourse, which testifies to the difficulty to conceptualise practices as non discursive: 'Although practices still rely on knowledge and embody material objects, in a discursive strong sense, the competence of routinely doing something socially meaningful often relies on discourse. It is thus relevant to conceive of discourse as practice and to understand practice as discourse' (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 16). Further, they define the knowledge driving practices as a 'background knowledge' which is partly tacit, partly reflexive' (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 17).

2. The discursive and social practices of regionalisation

i Categories of discursive and social practices

One of the ambitions of this doctoral thesis is to clarify the categories of practices that constitute the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies in South America and West Africa. In terms of discursive practices the aim is to identify ‘basic discourses’ that are analytical devices rather than empirically observable objects as specified by Hansen (2006, 51-52), which articulate different constructions of identity and policy. The next chapter presenting the methodology of this research will further elaborate on the use of ‘basic discourses’ for the empirical analysis. The assumption is that the ‘basic discourses’ on regionalisation identified across regions present similarities. Even though the historical context of each country and region makes the construction of regional projects a circumstantial and unique process; these regions are also part of an international system with its specific discourses including concepts and norms carrying a particular meaning that frames states’ actions such as ‘security’, ‘regional integration’, ‘interdependence’ and so on. Hence, regionalisation processes are not internal to the regions, they are also constituted by actors that are geographically external to the regions such as other regional projects, international actors, and even the academic literature. This enables a comparison between these ‘external’ discursive practices at play in this process.

Comparison across regions also allows for an analysis of how the discursive articulation between the concept of state/nation and region in the relevant countries frame the form and extent of the regionalisation. Indeed, as regionalisation can be seen as endangering the state’s sovereignty, the member states of the regional organisations try to frame the process through their discursive practices to maintain coherence between their national identity and conception of the state/nation, and the

identity and form of the regional project (Waeber 2002, 38-40).⁴⁹ The same assumptions on comparison can be made for social practices. For Neumann (2002, 633) 'Given the existence of non-narrative discourse, and given that practices are embedded in one another, it must be possible to establish what kind of repertoire of actions exists for a particular type of subject in a particular type of context.' The context is, in this case, the international context with 'external' actors trying to constitute the regional project through their discursive and social practices – a context partly shared by South America and West Africa – and the local context with its particular historical processes. It is precisely this international/regional encounter which constitutes the regionalisation process and will be analysed in the empirical chapters.

Security is at the core of many of these practices. The literatures on regional security complexes, security communities and region-building discussed in the first chapter show how the construction of regions is often closely linked to security practices. Discourses constituting regionalised foreign and security policies usually refer to security in a wide sense to justify these new practices – including, beyond military issues, economic, environmental, development or political problems. Various discourses on security can be articulated in support of the regionalisation of foreign and security policy using different degrees of 'danger'. They can stress the existence of a threatening Other: an immediate and existential threat which can only be answered through regionalisation. In West Africa, political crises such as coup d'état or civil wars are seen by member states as an existential threat with the potential to

⁴⁹ Regional projects are often the sites of struggle between two visions of regional integration: a supranational one with the pooling of the sovereignty of member states and an intergovernmental one with consensual decision-making and the strict respect of state sovereignty – on the model of the neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist theories of European integration. The two dynamics can usually be witnessed in all regional organisations including the European Union which is considered the most supranational one.

destabilise the region once more, and should therefore be addressed regionally. They can emphasise the existence of 'soft' security issues such as under-development or the need to regroup to face a loss of influence in the international system. Conversely, we will see in the empirical chapters with the case of Brazil that states might also try to desecuritise certain issues through their practices, with the aim to hinder further regionalisation that could lead to the constitution of a regional political community and thus threaten their sovereignty. This case shows how region-building and security are closely linked. All these discourses are (de)securitisation practices as will be explained in the next sub-part.

They are also articulated to 'community' elements stressing a shared identity and culture, regional solidarity, common political and economic interests and so on. A mix of security and community elements are found in the main official discourses in West Africa and South America with different articulations which produce contrasting policies and practices towards regionalisation. In West Africa the community and security element are articulated in such a way that regionalisation and the construction of a regional political community are presented as necessary for the survival of the states of the region; unlike South America where security is presented in the dominant discourse as internal to the states which are strictly sovereign units belonging to a non-constraining community. However, the articulation between the concept of state and region is always at the core of these discourses.

Secondly, social practices can also take various forms such as diplomatic consultations, coordination of policies, regional interventions, joint monitoring and patrolling of borders, joint negotiations in international forums, etc. These practices are sites where the official regional discourse is diffused, internalised and becomes taken-for-granted; where the regional identity is crystallising and taking form.

Processes of socialisation⁵⁰ are taking place through these practices that socialise people to the regional discourses and the identities they carry. Through his process, the region becomes something familiar and natural for the politicians, diplomatic officials and military officers who are the main actors of these social practices; they take part in its construction.

ii Securitisation practices

The concept of securitisation will be used in this dissertation to refer to security practices; it enables an emphasis on the discursive construction of security and the inclusion of both discursive and social practices. My understanding of securitisation draws both on the Copenhagen School (CS) and on the Sociological School (SS). It also stresses the link between security and identity. The SS approach expands the securitisation concept theorised by the CS to include, beyond speech acts, security practices in general. For the SS, securitisation is:

‘an articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image, repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions), about the critical vulnerability of a referent object, that concurs with the securitizing actor’s reasons for choices and actions, by investing the referent subject with such an aura of unprecedented threatening complexion that a customized policy must be undertaken immediately to block its development.’
(Balzacq 2011, 3)

However, while the SS insists on the non-discursive dimension of some security practices (using a Bourdieusian definition of practice); all security practices are defined here as ontologically discursive. The argument made by Balzacq against the

⁵⁰ Socialisation is, according to Checkel (2007, 5-6), ‘a process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community’ which outcome is ‘sustained compliance based on the internalization of new norms (...); this adoption is sustained over time and is quite independent from a particular structure of material incentives or sanctions.’ My focus will not be on the internalisation of new norms but on the diffusion of discourses (which can however carry particular norms) and identities; nevertheless, the process is similar than the one described by Checkel.

CS that he accuses of being too ‘poststructuralist’⁵¹ is based on a misconception of the role of language for the CS and for poststructuralists. Indeed, he argues that the CS has neglected the importance of ‘external or brute facts’ which are threats that do not depend on language mediation to endanger human life. For the CS, according to Balzacq (2011, 12) how problems are ‘out there’ is exclusively contingent upon how they are linguistically depicted: what we say about a problem determines its essence; whereas, for him, language does not construct reality, it only shapes our perception at best. This critique is misplaced as the CS do not assert that securitisation is self-referential in the sense that it only rests on the speech-act in itself; on the contrary, CS scholars make very clear that it also depends on external, contextual and social factors, such as the particular features of the material fact constructed as a threat, or the social position of the securitising actor (Buzan, Waver and de Wilde 1998, 32; Williams 2003, 514).

Moreover, the poststructuralist view of language and security is quite different from what Balzacq describes: poststructuralists do not believe that what we say about something determines its essence. The stance is that the material world exists ‘out there’ but it does not have meaning for us outside of our language. As Campbell (1992, 1-2) emphasises, it is not about denying that there are ‘real’ dangers in the world with consequences for people but it should be noticed that not all risks are interpreted as dangers or threats; which does not depend on objective factors – one

⁵¹ Calling the Copenhagen School ‘poststructuralist’ because it draws on Austin conception of ‘speech act’ is doubtful. Indeed, Austin focuses on ‘speech-act’ – the discursive action by which someone who is saying something is actually doing something – and its criteria of application or ‘felicity conditions.’ Speech-acts are performatives on two levels: illocutionary (what the person is doing in making the utterance) (Austin 1962, 99-101); perlocutionary (what a person is doing by making the utterance – the effect in those who hear it) (Austin 1962, 108); the first level of meaning being the locutionary level (what is the utterance about) (Austin 1962, 98-99). However, while Butler, Foucault and most of IR poststructuralist scholars also refer to the performativity of language, they do not acknowledge any criteria of application by which an utterance can be said to be ‘true’ or ‘false’ such as in Austin analytical philosophy; their focus is on how discourse is constituting our reality, objects and subjects and is thus intrinsically political and permeated with power.

could also say that not all interpreted threats have an ‘external brute fact’ at its origin. Even more, having a ‘brute fact’ or, differently put, a ‘real danger’ at its origin or not, a security threat will always be mediated by a discourse to be given an answer: there is no unique, objective or rational answer to a particular ‘brute fact’. In this sense all security practices are discursive.

Moreover, both the CS and the SS lack the clear link established by IR poststructuralists between foreign and security policies, and identity (Campbell 1992, Hansen 2006, Walker 1993, etc.). In the case of the SS no attention is given to identity. As for the CS, we saw in the first chapter how it divides security into several sectors; with one sector only – the societal sector – concerning threats to identity. A problematic division to the extent that securitisation is, in any sector (military, political, environmental and economic), supported by a particular understanding of a threatened ‘we’. Identities can thus be about political or economic values, history or territoriality, etc. This connection between securitisation practices and identity shows how securitisation practices are involved in the (re)production of identities. It is thus crucial to examine how regional securitisation practices contribute to the (re)production of a regional identity.

Finally, a more flexible approach to securitisation, which loosens the exclusive focus on ‘existential threats’, would also be more useful. As Williams (2003, 520-521) puts it:

‘The idea of security practices as operating, for example, along a continuum running from risk to threat, or from uncertainty to danger, might thus provide one of the most cogent criticisms of (...) the ambivalences of too decisionistic an approach.’

A conceptualisation of securitisation which depends on the meaning the actors attribute to security would be less restrictive and allow to give more attention to the

logic of security and its effect in each particular context. Ciuta (2009, 303) engages in a thoughtful critic of this dimension of securitisation theory, he argues that:

‘Securitisation theory urges the analyst not to engage in the evaluation of security issues qua security issues (either “real” or “unreal”), since this is decided by the actors who decide to securitise or not these issues. At the same time however, securitisation theory provides a yardstick for estimating whether given policies are about security or not, since ‘security’ [in terms of existential threats] is what fulfils the criteria of securitisation, and *nothing else*. As a result, securitisation theory is torn between its aim to establish the ‘essence’ of security, and its claim that security is what actors make of it.

A more appropriate conception of securitisation as practice would thus be that:

‘different conceptions and practices of security can operate in different places and at different times. The construction of security must therefore be understood as a practice (whose result is the meaning of security) that contextually constitutes other practices (thereby known as security policies), which contribute themselves to the continuous construction, sedimentation, and re-negotiation of what security means.’ (Ciuta 2009, 309)

This reformulation of Ciuta, which I will use in my empirical analysis, draws both on the CS and on the SS, and focuses on the actors’ determination of what is ‘security’ (not limited to ‘existential threats’) and on the context.

3. Practices from ‘outside’ the region

The previous part mentioned that the regionalisation process is constituted by actors geographically situated ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the region (Paasi 2009b, 132). I will thus look at what Hansen (2006, 73) calls ‘discursive encounters’ whereby the discourse of the Self is contrasted with the Other’s ‘counter-construction’ of Self and Other. For instance, in the case of South America, the US has an important role as the Other, but also as an actor proposing a counter-discourse on the dominant representation of security in South America.

Moreover, as regional projects multiply across the world they have an impact on each other through interaction, emulation or merely as a (counter-) example. The role of the EU in particular will be analysed, both as a model giving meaning to regional integration and therefore as part of the international context of West Africa and South America, and as an international actor actively trying to constitute other regionalisation processes on the basis of its own identity, concepts and norms. The encounter between the EU and Nigeria to constitute ECOWAS will be an important part of the empirical analysis of this dissertation. This is what Jones (2006, 416) calls 'international region building'.

These kinds of encounter between the 'North' and the 'South' have also been studied previously by Roxanne Doty (1996, 3), who labelled them 'imperial encounters' in order to 'convey the idea of asymmetrical encounters in which one entity has been able to construct "realities" that were taken seriously and acted upon and the other entity [which] has been denied equal degrees or kinds of agency.' She looks at how social identities have become constructed and at which practices and policies are thereby made possible (or impossible) through these encounters. I share her agenda of investigation, while not sharing her focus on 'processes of negation', whereby 'one significant consequence of the North's encounters with the South has been the denial of effective agency to the South' (Doty 1996, 11). While the EU discourses and practices participate to constitute ECOWAS as a regional political actor, we will see that they are only able to do so to the extent they respond to West African actors' representations of ECOWAS, in particular Nigeria's. As a result of this encounter the agency of West African actors is not denied – and even promoted – even though there is a constant struggle to impose their definition of the region.

The regionalisation of foreign and security policy is also constituted by academic discourses which illustrates the link between theory and practice highlighted by region-building scholars (Neumann 1994; Browning 2003; Ciuta 2008). Indeed, academic concepts such as 'securitisation' or 'security community' have entered the vocabulary of practitioners to justify certain policies and are thus framing their practices. Brazilian officials speak of South America as a security community and condemn attempts at securitising certain issues such as drug trafficking. Buzan and Waever's (2003) conceptualisation of regions as 'regional security complexes' is also clearly influencing the regionalisation of security policies. The main assumptions of their theoretical framework – the transnational nature of security issues, and the security interdependence between neighbouring states which cannot efficiently address these issues individually – are found recurrently in actors' discourses, in particular the EU's and ECOWAS's.

Conclusion

This second chapter aimed at elaborating a theoretical framework to study the regionalisation of foreign and security policies. Its most innovative dimension is the conceptualisation of regionalisation as an interplay between the discourses and practices of actors 'inside' and 'outside' the region. Discourses carry norms and concepts, and (re)produce the regional identities that enable regional practices to take place, as well as the other way around; i.e. specific practices enabling the (re)production of regional identities and norms. These practices can take the form of consultations between politicians, diplomats or militaries, joint military industrial programs, regional interventions, joint border monitoring, common positions in international forums, etc. Through these practices, actors are socialised to regional

discourses and (re)produce the regional identity. However, regional actors also adapt and create new forms of practices to respond to new events and challenges. These practices can then transform the regional discourse and identity. My framework, then, takes into account the historical dimension of the process, by means of an analysis of discourse formation, while recognising the way that relevant agents continue to shape and modify the regionalisation process via social practices.

In the next chapter, a methodology will be developed to show how this theoretical framework can be applied to empirically analyse the discourses and practices of the relevant actors of the process.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Introduction

This chapter elaborates a methodology to study the representations⁵² of the actors involved in the process of regionalisation: how they are formed and evolve; and how the discourses structuring these representations are (re)produced, ‘put-in-use’ and can be transformed through the practices of actors.

The argument developed in this research is constitutive and not causal. Indeed, discursive structures and practices do not stand in a causal relation inasmuch as discursive structures are the precondition for and are at the same time (re)produced by actors’ practices. I am not interested in ‘why’ questions which, as Dunn (2008, 80) rightly highlights, tend to assume that a certain set of choices and answers pre-exist – and, in particular, are prompt to assume that objective factors exist, outside of the representations of the actors and the historical processes, which can causally explain the object of analysis. I investigate instead how the possibilities for action emerge and the processes through which actions are taken and social practices established. To my sense, this provides for a more insightful analytical framework than causal explanation to analyse the complexities of a social phenomenon such as regionalisation. Against criticisms addressed to the arbitrariness of non-causal approaches, Hansen (2006, 5) showed successfully in her book that: ‘adopting a non-causal epistemology does not imply an abandonment of theoretically rigorous framework, empirical analyses of “real world relevance”, or systematic assessments of data and methodology.’

⁵² I call ‘representation’ an articulation linking different elements and producing a particular identity/policy link. A ‘basic discourse’ is made of different representations that tie together a particular narrative.

Drawing partly on Hansen's (2006) methodological guidelines, this chapter seeks to elaborate a rigorous methodology to analyse the discourses and practices of the actors of the regionalisation process. This methodology is twofold: it relies both on a poststructuralist discourse analysis and on interpretative process tracing.

The first part of the chapter explains the method used to analyse the discourses and representations of the relevant actors whether 'inside' or 'outside' of the regions (regional powers, regional institutions, the EU, the international community, the academic community). It draws on Hansen's (2006) poststructuralist discourse analysis methodology to organise the actor's representations into 'basic discourses.' It also delimits the field of this research. The second part of the chapter elaborates an interpretative process tracing methodology aiming to study the interplay between discourses and practices; it builds mainly on ethnographic methods.

I. A poststructuralist discourse analysis

In this first section I explain how I proceed to define the 'basic discourses' through their identification, organisation and contextualisation, before delimiting the field of discourse analysed and acknowledging the difficulties that this type of methodology raises.

1. Defining the 'basic discourses' of regionalisation

The discourse analysis undertaken in this study aims to categorise and contextualise the main representations of the actors into 'basic discourses' before tracing how the representations frame the practices of the actors, which will be the object of the second section of this chapter. The overall empirical analysis can be methodologically divided into different steps inspired by Dunn's (2008, 90) classification for analysing data:

1. Identify the representations in a corpus of texts concerning a particular issue – here the regionalisation of foreign and security policies;
2. Organise these representations into ‘basic discourses’;
3. Contextualise these representations and discourses within the larger structures of meaning;
4. Explore how ‘basic’ discourses constitute policies and practices.

i Identifying the articulations of identities

The first step of the discourse analysis consists in identifying the main representations in the texts. Representations are defined as articulations made between elements through processes of linking (positive identity) and differentiation (negative identity) thereby producing particular identities. Chapter two already thoroughly explained how the formation of meaning and identity is relational (Hansen 2006). Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 105) define articulations as ‘any practices establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practices.’ Far from being fixed, these articulations are inherently unstable to the extent that they establish links between different elements to constitute identities (of subjects and objects) (Hansen 2006, 20-21; Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 96). Identities are constituted through an articulation of a large number of elements; it is therefore possible to study the relative stability of these articulations or their instability, as well as the tensions between the elements which are made to fit together – sometimes in an inconsistent way – within a political discourse (Hansen 2006, 28-29).

On the one hand, representations are highly structured by the system of meaning (discursive structures) which organises our knowledge, its norms and conventions. However, on the other hand, they can be transformed through the political agency of actors who can use the instability of the articulations and/or a change of context to

produce new identities and ‘facts’. Indeed, if we see identity and policies as co-constituted through discourse, the practice of constructing a different identity – by making new articulations between ‘material facts’ and different elements – provide the basis to advocate a change of policy (Hansen 2006, 20-21). While policymakers present the dominant link between identity and foreign policy as necessary and natural to the relevant audience (Hansen 2006, 28-29; Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 112); political opponents try to destabilise this link by providing a different articulation showing that the current policy is not an appropriate or legitimate answer to the ‘facts’ on the ground (Hansen 2006, 32-33). Hence, the aim of a poststructuralist discourse analysis is, according to Hansen (2008, 32-33), ‘to study in an empirically rigorous and structured manner the way in which facts are formed and how they impact on foreign policy debates: how are facts coupled with representations of identity and to particular policies?’

This doctoral thesis empirically investigates the construction of identity and the formulation of regionalised foreign and security policies. Analytically this means I look at how elements are articulated within discourses; how representations become provisionally fixated in this process and with which rootedness; where are the instabilities and tensions in these articulations; and how contesting discourses provide different articulations of the same elements in order to produce different effects in terms of policies (Hansen 2006; Dunn.2008, 86). The analysis draws on Hansen’s (2006) methodological guidelines for poststructuralist discourse analysis: first, examining how the chosen ‘selves’ are articulated to particular ‘others’; how their identities are defined according to spatial, temporal and ethical constructions; finally how these ‘selves’ and their ‘others’ find themselves articulated within a system to various other elements through processes of linking and differentiation.

The 'selves' I investigate are multiple which entails a comparative dimension. These different 'selves' are the regional organisations (ECOWAS, Mercosur and Unasur) and the regional powers, Brazil and Nigeria. The 'selves' can be articulated to multiple others instead of being specifically articulated to a threatening Other. Chapter two showed that the construction of identities relies on wide range of degrees of differences and similarities. The 'Brazilian self', for instance, has the US as a threatening Other and the regional organisations and South American countries as 'others' with which it shares similarities but which can also become threatening. The key articulation that will be analysed in all texts is the one made between the state and the region: it can be positive or negative, consistent or inconsistent, and have a different meaning depending on the context but these two elements are always present (even if implicitly).⁵³ Next to this core articulation, other concepts such as 'security', 'defence', 'community', 'development', 'sovereignty', 'autonomy' are also recurrent in the texts. There is a positioning of the 'self' (a state 'self' or a region 'self') in a state/nation narrative within a web of meaning where these various concepts are connected through articulatory practices of linking and differentiation – thereby processing events and producing facts legitimising or hindering the regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

The identities of these 'selves' and 'others' are also constructed through spatial, temporal and ethical dimensions. These are heuristic categories elaborated by Hansen (2006, 46) to analyse the construction of identities in foreign and security policy discourses which separate an 'inside' from an 'outside', take place across time and with chronological references, and need legitimacy to be accepted. The spatial construction of Nigeria's and of Brazil's identity is defined according to their

⁵³ Hansen (2008, 44) notes that the 'self'/'other' juxtaposition does not have to be explicit in every text; it can even be completely implicit when the discourse becomes established.

situation within their region and globally; and according to the place of their region in the world and compared to other regions. The delimitation of borders and of political spaces with which or against which they define themselves contribute to produce their identity. The boundaries of the ‘Nigerian self’, for instance, are associated to West Africa as a whole so the ‘others’ here – West African states – are positively articulated to Nigeria.

The temporal construction is also crucial to understand ‘political spaces and subjects as constituted in time’ (Hansen 2006, 48-49). Indeed, the construction of national ‘selves’ is always a historical narrative: the appropriation of past events to justify and legitimise the present (Ringmar 1996, 24). This construction is made along the line of concepts such as ‘development’, ‘transformation’, ‘construction’, ‘continuity’, ‘change’, etc. For Nigeria, the evolution of regionalisation in West Africa towards a European integration model, which is seen as necessary for the future of the region, shows how both the spatial and temporal dimensions are at play. Conversely, for Brazil the representation of a still on-going construction of the nation-state hinders the possibility of relaxing sovereignty through the regionalisation process.

Lastly, the ethical dimension concerns how policymakers present their policy actions as being in the national interests of the state and its citizens, or inherently moral (Hansen 2006, 50).

ii Organising the representations

The second step is to organise these representations into ‘basic discourses.’ Hansen (2006, 51) suggests this useful type of classification on the grounds that even though foreign policy debates are constituted through individual texts (always unique), they converge around common themes and representations articulating similar elements

and producing a construction of identities entailing a set of policies: 'The analytical value of basic discourses is rather that they provide a lens through which a multitude of different representations and policies can be seen as systematically connected' (Hansen 2006, 51-52).

These 'basic discourses' are thus ideal types indicating the central points of convergence and contestations of a foreign policy debate (Hansen 2006, 51-52); and enabling an analysis of how these discourses dynamically interact with each other across time and in response to their context. Some of these discourses last, some are modified or even replaced. Each discourse has a different degree of historical depth, of dominance or of marginalisation which contributes in structuring the debate and thereby policies and actors' practices (Neumann 2008, 73). The objective is, according to Hansen (2006, 51-52), to identify discourses with very different constructions of identity and policy, which separate the political landscape. Neumann (2008, 63) explains well that a debate usually includes a dominant representation of reality and one or more alternative representations.

The level of contestation and interaction between these discourses is context-specific. In some cases the dominant discourse can be hegemonic while the contesting discourse(s) are barely noticeable. For Neumann, (2008, 70) this means the debate is closed; he argues that discourse analysis is particularly well suited for studying situations where power is maintained by the aid of culture and challenged only to a limited degree. This appears to be the case in West Africa where one hegemonic discourse frames the regionalisation process whereas in South America a dominant discourse exists but is contested in several sites by a competing discourse proposing an alternative path for the regionalisation process. Nevertheless, as the construction of identities is dynamical and inherently unstable, even hegemonic discourses can be

suddenly and aggressively contested (for instance as a response to a change in the context) or progressively by another ‘basic discourse’ – attacking and rearticulating the construction of identity (Hansen 2006, 31). Indeed, social relations are always in some degree of flux and prone to evolution (Neumann 2008, 71): what Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 95-96) call the ‘openness of the social.’ The field can also be said to be open if there are two or more discourses and none of them are dominant (Neumann 2008, 70).

The role of a poststructuralist discourse analysis is therefore to trace the evolution of these ‘basic discourses’, their rootedness, the tensions and instabilities within them and between them, and how this frames the policies and actors’ practices: the objective is ‘to explore the multiplicity and contestedness of discourses, to disaggregate actors, and to explore the complicated ways discourses were circulated and achieved social dominance’ (Dunn 2008, 83).

iii Contextualising the representations

Contextualising discourses is one of the key dimensions of this research. It allows us to show how foreign and security policy regionalisation processes are produced by both ‘internal’ and ‘external’ actors, and how they result from structured historical processes, but also depend on current events and on the agency of actors. Contextualisation is thus an answer to the limits of theoretical frameworks based on the causal effect of objective factors that were criticised in the first chapter. I understand it broadly as analysing these discourses in their political, social, historical and geographic context. For Dunn (2008, 83): ‘Interpretation requires not just a description of these particular representations and representational practices but a deeper contextualization within the larger structures of meaning of which they are a

part.’ The ‘basic discourses’ will be contextualised in three main ways: historically, locally and geographically.

Firstly, the use of conceptual histories is a useful tool to trace the rootedness of the representations in history. It is indeed crucial to grasp the durability of these representations in order to understand their points of tension and instabilities, and the possibilities of change. A representation which is deeply rooted in history is in general more difficult to challenge and modify. I will also examine how references to ‘historical facts’ are made to justify the dominant discourses: how past events are being processed in the present discourses to legitimise policies. An intertextual understanding of texts is an important tool to analyse these two dimensions. Neumann (2008, 1) refers to intertextuality when he writes that ‘the discourse will carry with it the “memory” of its own genesis. Showing how text is made possible by the preceding texts, often it is possible to find a prehistory of the main representation.’ This is consistent with Hansen’s (2006, 8) description of intertextuality – drawing on Julia Kristeva – as a way in which texts build their argument and authority through references to other texts, by making direct quotes or by adopting their key concepts or catchphrases. She insightfully adds that by making these links present texts also produce new meaning as they incorporate these references into the present context and argument. The analysis of these intertextual links is therefore central to historically contextualise ‘basic discourses’. More will be said in the following part on the choice of an ‘intertextual model’.

Secondly, ‘basic discourses’ should be contextualised in their current environment. Having a good knowledge of the social, material and institutional context, and events taking place in the region is important to understand how this environment interacts and is being processed by the ‘basic discourses’. This shows to

poststructuralist critics that the material world is not being neglected. While poststructuralism relies on a monist understanding of world and mind as inseparable (Jackson 2010, 31), this does not impede material factors from being taken into account. However, the focus is on how these material factors are constituted through discourse.⁵⁴

Thirdly, contextualisation is also done across space to include discursive and social practices stemming from actors ‘external’ to the region. Indeed, the regional representations can also draw on concepts and meanings articulated by these ‘external’ actors’ discourses. In the case of West Africa the most relevant ‘external’ actor is the EU; in South America, the EU, the US and the OAS are all trying to frame the regionalisation process. This geographical contextualisation shows that case studies in IR are not independent: both West Africa and South America are part of the same international system.

2. Delimiting the field of discourses

This part carefully delineates the objects of my analysis to show that a poststructuralist discourse analysis can be systematic and methodologically coherent with its aims and presuppositions. I will first specify the actors and the time frame that delimit this study. Secondly, I will clarify which type of data is used for the empirical analysis. Finally, I finish with some comments on the difficulties faced to access the data and a discussion on the validity of discourse analysis.

⁵⁴ Jackson’s (2010, 35-36) convincingly supports this argument by stating that ‘mind-world monism is not more “idealist” (...) than mind-world dualism is “realist” (in the sense of privileging the world); it is not the privileging of one or the other side of a mind-world dichotomy that makes a position monistic, but the rejection of the very distinction in the first place.’

i The actors of the regionalisation process

Ideally, following my conceptualisation of regions as the product of the discourses and practices of actors from ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the region, I should have analysed the identity/policy link constituting the practices of all the relevant actors of the regionalisation processes in West Africa and South America. These include all South American and West African states, the regional institutions and all the ‘external’ actors intervening or having an influence in the two regions. However, discourse analysis is very time consuming and requires an in-depth analysis and knowledge of the context; extensively studying all these actors was therefore not possible in the time frame of this doctoral thesis. My choice was to follow Hansen’s advice (2006, 75-77) and pick the most influential ‘selves’. A choice consistent with the region-building approach which emphasises the role of power in the construction of regions; as well as with Waever’s (2002, 39) work on regional integration who stresses that the major powers are at the core of this construction inasmuch nothing can be done without their participation.

Hence, my main objects of study are the regional organisations and the regional powers in each region. In the case of South America, there are two regional ‘selves’: Mercosur and Unasur which are the two main regional organisations with a political and security dimension.⁵⁵ The regional power is Brazil and the main ‘external actors’ are the EU, the OAS and the US. I first analyse the official discourses of these regional ‘selves’ to clarify how they frame the regionalisation of foreign and security policies and enable a range of possible practices. Then I trace how the Brazilian discourse constitutes this regional official discourse; how it delimits the field of possibilities of the regionalisation process. However, when a discrepancy appears

⁵⁵ There are many other regional organisations in South America such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization or the Andean Community, which are either not working or do not have any political and security dimension.

between the Brazilian discourse and the regional discourse I look at contesting positions from other member states and at the discourse of the relevant 'external' actors. To examine the struggle between the different actors to impose their own project of regionalisation, I analyse the intertextual links between the discourses of the various actors and the official regional discourse. While multiple selves are analysed, only the official regional discourse and the Brazilian discourse are studied in-depth through a large amount of texts and interviews. The 'external' actors' discourses are also relatively extensively analysed depending on their relevance in the process. However, the analysis of other member states is much less systematic following the argument that Brazil sets the limits of the form and extent of the regionalisation process.

The analysis is similar in the case of West Africa where the regional power is Nigeria and the regional organisation studied is ECOWAS. Another regional organisation also has some importance in the region, the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), but it does not include a political and security dimension. The discourses and practices of the EU in West Africa will also be thoroughly examined, as the role of the EU is crucial to understand the regionalisation process in this region.

Besides these actors, I also take into account, in both regions, the influence of the IR literature: how are their main concepts assimilated in the discourses of the relevant 'selves' and how does it frame their practices? As was mentioned, the Security Community and Regional Security Complex literatures are particularly influential.

At the end, my choices of 'selves' were not so much driven by a theoretical concern than by an empirical one. My first question was: which representations mainly constitute the regional official discourse(s) and practices? Where do they

come from? My empirical research and fieldwork enabled me to answer these questions and then define the relevant ‘selves’ to be analysed.

The discourses of these different actors are analysed in a time frame which allows for the analysis of the evolution of the regionalisation process. Logically, this research starts at the inception of this process in both regions up until today. In South America it began in the 1990s after the creation of Mercosur (1991) – Unasur was created much later in 2008. The 1990s were important years as there were several regional political interventions in the framework of Mercosur to handle breaches of democracy in Paraguay (1996, 1999). In West Africa the 1990s also correspond to the beginning of the process with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group’s (ECOMOG) interventions in the civil wars in Liberia (1990) and Sierra Leone (1997). From this period, the regionalisation of foreign and security policies became a political issue debated in the diplomatic corps, the ministries of defence and within the governments of these organisations’ member states.

ii The choice of the data

Hansen (2006) gives useful methodological guidelines to make sure that the choice and the analysis of the data are not arbitrary but justified and structured. One of her central pieces of advice concerns the choice of an intertextual model which depends on the object of study and the set of research questions. This research draws on her first model based on official foreign policy discourse and centred both on political leaders with official authority to sanction the foreign policy pursued and on those with central roles in executing the foreign policy (Hansen 2006, 60-64).⁵⁶ These

⁵⁶ The other two models examine: the likely transformation of the official discourse (model 2); the cultural representations (model 3A); and the marginal discourses (model 3B). They do so by looking at texts beyond official discourse coming from the medias, popular culture, NGOs, civil society, etc. (Hansen 2006, 60-64). Conversely, in the first model that I chose for this research the texts beyond

actors are here leading politicians and senior officials of the governments, diplomatic corps, and ministries of defence of the states; as well as senior civil servants and military officers from the regional organisations. This model identifies texts produced by these actors, as well as the texts that have an intertextual influence on their discourse. According to Hansen (2006, 60-64), the aim is to investigate the constructions of identity within the official discourse, analyse the way in which intertextual links stabilise the discourse, and to examine how official discourses encounter criticisms: 'Analytically, the basic discourses of a debate structure the political and substantial positions and divisions, whereas intertextual models identify the locations of different discourses in relation to official discourse and other sites of opinion and debate' (Hansen 2006, 66). The first intertextual model is well adapted to the issue I am analysing in this research: the constitution, stabilisation and contestation of the dominant official discourse on the regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

Intertextual links work through explicit references or quotes. They can also be implicit through a reference not quoted but used, a catchphrase or a concept referring to a body of earlier texts (Hansen 2006, 56-59). These intertextual links are key in order to analyse how various actors constitute the process of regionalisation. For instance, the Brazilian Minister of Defence constantly refers to South America as a 'security community' – a conceptual intertextual link with the SC literature. In the same way, ECOWAS policy documents constantly refer to concepts located at the core of the EU's security discourse such as 'comprehensive conflict prevention', which shows the central role of the EU in the West African regionalisation process. An intertextual reading of foreign policy texts is thus useful to understand how the

official discourse are analysed only to the extent that an intertextual link can be traced to the official discourse.

official discourse has been constituted and to show that their so-called ‘objectivity’ is actually socially and politically constructed.

The corpus of texts analysed comes from a large array of sources. The greater part stems from the time of study and are primary documents produced by the actors defined in Hansen’s first intertextual model. The documents include legal texts, speeches, political declarations, interviews, articles, books, etc. They can be single-authored or produced in dialogue with political opponents or journalists (Hansen 2006, 60-64). Some secondary material is also used, in particular conceptual histories with the aim to trace the genealogy of the representations and their degree of sedimentation (Hansen 2006, 82-83) – even though poststructuralism gives epistemological and methodological priority to the study of primary texts (Hansen 2006, 82-84).

The corpus of texts has two circles: a narrower circle including key texts frequently quoted and functioning as nodal points within the intertextual web of debates (Hansen 2006, 82-83). They are coined ‘canonical texts’ or ‘monuments’ by Neumann (2008, 67): ‘some texts will show up at crossroads or anchor points, such as the government treatises outlining policy’. According to Neumann (2008, 67), once the discourse analyst has identified these texts and read them, he can then read the central texts that they refer to (an intertextual reading) and is soon able to identify the main representations. These particular texts are subjected to the more thorough analysis of their articulations and construction of identities.

The second wider circle includes a much larger amount of texts providing the basis for a more quantitative identification of the ‘basic discourses’ (Hansen 2006, 52-54). The criteria for selection of this general material according to Hansen are:

1. A clear articulation of identity and policy;

2. Widely read and attended to texts;
3. A formal authority to define a political position.

Table 1 shows the criteria used for text selection:

<i>Material</i>	<i>Temporal location</i>	
	<i>Time of study</i>	<i>Historical material</i>
General material	3 criteria: 1/Clear articulation 2/Widely read and attended to 3/Formal authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual histories
Key texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary reading of broader set of sources • Digital search engine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual histories • Quoted in contemporary debates • Re-published

Table 1: ‘Textual selection matrix’ (source: Hansen 2006, 74).

However, because not all texts score high on all these criteria, the general material is adapted in a complementary way to fulfil all the criteria (Hansen 2006, 84-87):

<i>Type of text</i>	<i>Criteria</i>		
	<i>Clear articulation</i>	<i>Widely read and attended to</i>	<i>Formal authority</i>
Presidential addresses	Yes	Yes	Yes
Speeches of high ranked national officials	Yes	Yes	Variable
Speeches of high ranked regional	Yes	Variable	Variable

organisations officials			
Communiqués of the heads of states and government of the regional organisations	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legislation and official documents from the regional organisations	Variable	Variable	Yes
Legislation and official documents from the member states	Variable	Yes	Yes
Official press releases	Yes	Variable	No
Fieldwork interviews	Yes	No	No

Table 2: ‘Criteria of selection and common types of general material’ (source: adapted from Hansen 2006, 77).

Table 2 introduces the main types of primary documents analysed in this research. Unlike Hansen, however, I have included, among others, my fieldwork interviews. IR discourse analysts are usually very careful with interviewing. Hansen (2006, 84-87) warns that while it is possible to include one’s own interviews, the researcher should be conscious of their particular textual form as resulting from an interaction and a dialogue rather than from a monologue. Neumann (2008, 73) also adds that a discourse analyst should give priority to written texts and sees interviews as complementary or substitutionary. The second part of this chapter will further

elaborate on the preparation and the conduct of the interviews but I will already provide some insights on the relation between interviews and poststructuralist discourse analysis. First, the responses of the officials interviewed are structured by the same representations and structures of meaning than the other primary documents analysed.⁵⁷ Second, an interviewer should be aware of his position as a researcher guiding the interviews. The responses are driven by the questions and the interaction. As an interviewer I am always careful to have very unstructured questions in order not to impose the concepts driving my research and let the person speak with her/his own words and concepts. While keeping this issue in mind and making sure that the interviews are analysed within a large corpus of primary material, interviews can be very valuable to grasp the contesting discourses. This is particularly the case when the dominant discourse is almost hegemonic. Interviews can enable the researcher to understand which are the contesting discourses circulating within relatively closed institutions such as the diplomatic corps or the defence ministry where contesting discourses always exist to some extent but are not publicly diffused. It is also useful in some developing countries where the governments and ministries do not publicly produce many official documents and/or where they are not accessible to the public or to researchers.

Finally, the last question to address concerns when to decide to stop reading texts. Neumann's (2008, 69-70) answer is that one should read as many texts as possible until having defined the key texts and having a satisfying account of the different positions structuring the political debate. My analysis was thus adjusted until I managed to subsume all the texts under one of the main positions or 'basic discourses'.

⁵⁷ As Waeber (2002, 26-27) puts it, the concern is about 'the codes and norms used by actors to relate to each other which are not the individual properties of people.'

iii Difficulties of a poststructuralist discourse analysis and the question of validity

The first difficulty of a discourse analysis concerns the ability to access the data. When analysing the discourses of actors situated within rather secretive institutions such as the ministries of foreign affairs and the ministries of defence it can be difficult to obtain certain documents. Dunn (2008, 88) acknowledges that this is often the case in developing countries where the access to documents and archives can be made difficult due to suspicion towards foreign researchers, as well as to mismanagement. In West Africa, for instance, almost no documents are publicly diffused. One of the solutions to this problem of access was, as noted, to conduct interviews. At the end, adding together the documents found on the official websites, some documents sent by officials and the interviews, enabled the collection of enough primary documents to undertake a robust discourse analysis.

Secondly, discourse analysis requires language skills, historical and cultural knowledge to be able to understand and examine the production of meanings in particular social and political settings. According to Neumann (2008, 64), ‘The point is that a researcher needs a basic level of cultural competence to recognize the shared understandings that create a common frame of reference, which makes it possible for people to act in relation to one another’; and ‘The challenge is not to get naturalized – not to “become” part of the universe studied – but to denaturalize.’ Acquiring a good knowledge of the codes, norms and conventions of the political discourse is thus crucial to the analysis. I have a good knowledge of all the languages of the political discourses: English, French and Portuguese in West Africa; Spanish and Portuguese in South America. Moreover, I enhanced my historical and cultural knowledge of both regions with a field research period of four months in Brazil and one month in

Nigeria. This fieldwork was crucial to gather additional insights into the political culture of Brazil and Nigeria.

In addition to the difficulty of accessing the documents, the claims I make in this research are limited by the fact that I could not analyse the discourse of all the member states of the regional organisation. An analysis of the interaction between the different states of each region with the aim to examine how the dominant discourse on regionalisation is constituted through their struggle would have been an added value to this project. However, this would have been too time consuming and expensive; the solution, as explained earlier, was to analyse in-depth the discourses of the most important national ‘selves’ (Brazil and Nigeria) and of the regional organisations. I took for granted that Nigeria and Brazil are the states with the most influence that set the form and the limits of the process; particularly in the area of foreign and security policy which is the most sovereignty sensitive. There is enough consensus on their key role among political, academic and press circles, inside and outside of the regions, to be able to take this role as a point of departure for this analysis, and which was confirmed during the empirical research.

Finally, the lack of external validity and reliability of a discourse analysis is often criticised by positivist scholars to the extent that the conclusions drawn from the analysis cannot be verified, falsified or tested. However, falsifiability and testing are methods of verification that can only be applied to what Jackson (2010, 31) calls a dualist philosophical ontology which is:

‘the philosophical ontology that makes meaningful the proposition that we can empirically evaluate scientific ontologies, because if there is a world existing “out there” in a mind independent way, we can in principle compare any given scientific ontology to that world and see if it matches in some sense.’

The aim of causal explanations and generalisations is thus to reflect as closely as possible this independent reality against which the scientific production can be tested through a specific array of methods. By contrast, this research is ontologically monist to the extent that it does not see the mind and the world as independent. Accordingly, such verifiability procedures cannot be used. For example, the concept of reliability makes no sense here to the extent that different analysts could come with different results when reading the same texts. Indeed, one reading does not exhaust all others and the same texts can be subjected to multiple research questions with a focus on particular elements. There can however be weaker readings when the discourse analysis is not guided by clear and structured methodological and theoretical criteria (Hansen 2006, 45).

Following the analyticist traditions described by Jackson (2010, 142) in his book, I provide an ideal-type analytical model based on discourses and practices which produces an analytical narrative aiming at ordering the social phenomenon of regionalisation:

‘A analytical stance is one that seeks to ground the production of knowledge in concrete practical involvements of the researcher, and does so through a strategy involving the instrumental oversimplifications of complex, actual situations. These deliberate oversimplifications, or *ideal-types*, are then utilized to form case-specific “analytical narratives” that explain particular outcomes.’

Hence, I am not aiming at any point to provide a ‘truth’ corresponding to a mind-independent world. What matters is to have enough supporting evidence and convincing conclusions that make sense to the researcher and the readers. In Jackson’s (2010, 145-146) words:

‘since ideal-types cannot be falsified as one would falsify a hypothesis – comparing an ideal-type to the actual existence of the object that ideal type was derived from would invariably “prove” that the ideal-type was descriptively deficient in some respect – the only meaningful way to

evaluate whether an ideal-type is a good one or not is pragmatically: that is, to examine whether, once applied, the ideal-type is efficacious in revealing intriguing and useful things about the objects to which it is applied.’

At the end, the criteria to assess the discourse analysis refer to the internal validity of the research – whether given its epistemological and methodological choices and assumptions, its conclusions follow rigorously from the evidence and logical argumentation provided (Jackson 2010, 22); and to the usefulness of the empirical conclusions.

II. Linking discourses and practices: interpretative process tracing

After clarifying the criteria used for the discourse analysis, this second section provides a methodological framework to trace discourses to practices. This interpretative process tracing aims to trace how identity/policy articulations within discourse are (re)produced and translated into actual policies through the actors’ social practices – and to understand the meaning of these practices for the larger process of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies. Several questions drive this methodology such as: why were these policy options chosen, how do they relate to the dominant and contesting discourse(s)? How do new events and issues arising relate to the establishment of new social practices? Is there a feedback effect from new social practices to the discourse(s)?

In this section I first explain what interpretative process tracing is and how I will use this methodology to analyse two case studies. I then specify which data will be used and how it will be analysed. Lastly, I provide explanations on the fieldwork conducted in West Africa and South America.

1. Interpretative process tracing

i. Interpretative process tracing versus positivist process tracing

Process tracing is a method that has become increasingly popular in political science following a relatively recent focus on ‘process’ and ‘causal mechanisms’ to explain social phenomena as an alternative to statistical analyses, correlations and formal theorising. Process tracing enables the researcher to take into account both the institutional and social structures as well as the agency of actors (Bennett and Checkel 2011, 1). The objective is to proceed to an in-depth examination of the different elements coming together to form an event or phenomenon following a process or ‘social mechanism’ that the researcher tries to uncover. The guidelines to proceed to process tracing in the literature point to looking at qualitative data such as press articles, expert surveys, interviews, official documents, etc. to trace the interactions and links between different variables leading to a particular outcome (Checkel 2008, 115). Bennett and Checkel (2011, 8) define the data as ‘evidence from within the temporal, spatial, or topical domain defined as a case. This can include a great deal of evidence on contextual or background factors that influence how we measure and interpret the variables within a case.’ They also advise for a mix of induction and deduction (Bennett and Checkel 2011, 22).

The process tracing employed in this research shares most of these guidelines to the extent that it looks at qualitative data with the aim to trace the link between discourses and practices. The data is therefore gathered from the context (historical, geographical, etc.) – for instance, through the discourse analysis – as well as from the direct context of the social practices studied. My method of proceeding is both deductive and inductive, or abductive as promoted by Pouliot (2007): going back and forth from the hypotheses to the empirical data. While starting from several non-

constraining hypotheses on the regionalisation process and the actors involved – together with an analytical model based on discourses and practices – the empirical data guided most of my analysis, which led to a constant revision and refining of my hypotheses. According to Wagenaar (2011, 244) this is what characterises interpretative work: ‘the key heuristic moment consists of making sense of raw empirical data. This process of sense making always consists of entering into a dialogue between the preconceptions we bring to the study and the empirical data we have collected.’ The heuristic strategy of confronting our theories with our data is what helps us create ‘the conditions for novelty, for surprise’ in our research that distinguishes good interpretive work (Wagenaar 2011, 243).

However, interpretative process tracing differentiates itself from positivist process tracing in that, instead of hypothesising ‘causal mechanisms’, it looks at constitutive mechanisms. Indeed, there is a consensus in the mostly positivist literature on process tracing that it should be used to trace the causality between independent and dependent variables: ‘we understand causal mechanism to mean the intervening processes through which causes exert their effects’ (Goertz and Mahoney 2010, 24). In a more elaborate definition Bennet and Checkel (2011, 17) explain it ‘as the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might explain the case.’ They recognise, nevertheless, that process tracing could be used in interpretative work even in the case where agents and structures are considered as so inherently mutually constitutive ‘that it is not possible to separate events into discrete moves in which either the agent or the structure is primarily driving the process’ (Bennet and Checkel 2011, 17). Hence, while it is impossible to find out which variable is the cause or consequence of another, it is

possible to break down events and steps, using a bracketing strategy, between the effect of structures on agents and the way agents respond to it (Bennet and Checkel 2011, 17).

This is precisely the method used in this research. My argument is constitutive rather than causal inasmuch the structures of meaning within language constitute – open the possibility – for discursive and social practices but do not deterministically cause them. Moreover, the practices also (re)produce these discursive structures, which makes these two processes inseparable. A bracketing strategy is thus used to be able to analyse this interplay: first with the analysis of the discourses categorised into ‘basic discourses’ as was detailed in the first section of this chapter; then with the tracing of these discourse(s) to social practices. I look at how social practices relate to the dominant or contesting discourse, why they were established in a particular context, and their meaning for the wider process of regionalisation. The aim is also to understand how the (discursive) structures interact with the agency of the actors adapting to their context and how this may feed back and transform the discourse. It is heuristically useful to separate the discursive structures from the practices to understand the effect of this interplay on the regionalisation process. This method gives importance to agency to be able to conceptualise change; but is at the same time strong on the structural context which is not the case of positivist process tracing; a weakness which is acknowledged by its main proponents (Checkel 2008, 116; Bennet and Checkel 2011, 29).

However, this interpretative process tracing cannot be assessed in terms of verifiability or reliability which are standards used for positivist process tracing. Indeed, ‘constitutive mechanisms’ cannot be tested against an objective, mind-independent reality. As mentioned, the analytical framework of this dissertation is

monist, it does not recognise ‘causal mechanisms’ as an ontological reality, separated from the mind, which can be discovered by the researcher, as positivist process-tracers put it (Bennet and Checkel 2011, 14). Consequently, the recommendation to test one’s analysis against other theories to assess which one explains better this reality is fruitless here (Bennet and Checkel 2011, 23). The validity of this analysis resides in a clear and structured methodology and enough empirical evidence to support the arguments and conclusions. It has to be coherent and strong enough to convince the readers of its empirical value and shed light on the regionalisation process. Against criticisms from positivist researchers qualifying interpretative work as a soft or unsystematic way of doing research, Wagenaar (2011, 251) aptly responds that interpretative methods are ‘systematic, methodical, empirically driven activities that, when done well, set up conditions for a generative, critical confrontation of theory and the empirical world.’

Interpretative process tracing also stands aside from positivist process tracing works to the extent that it refutes the possibility of finding a mix of variables that deterministically cause the same outcome – one of the main weaknesses of the IR literature on regional projects as shown in chapter one. The variables used in this research – the discourses and practices – are not objective variables; they are heuristic tools and too context and meaning-dependent to produce the same outcome in a variety of cases. Geertz (1973, 26) summarises this clearly about interpretative work: ‘the essential task of theory building (...) is not to codify abstract regularities but to make thick description possible, not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them.’ Generalisability is thus not possible in this type of work even though structural (but unstable) features can shape similarities across cases.

ii. The case studies

Two case studies were chosen to study the social practices of regionalisation: the first case study concerns the practice of regional intervention, which can take various forms including political action, electoral monitoring, humanitarian or military intervention in a state of the region or outside of the region. The second case study concerns the regional management of transnational security issues (drug trafficking, organised criminality, terrorism, piracy, etc.). These two types of regional practices are telling cases about the regionalisation process, and community and identity building inasmuch as they raise very sensitive issues for the states in respect of borders, sovereignty, non-interference, etc. The establishment of these regional practices depends greatly on the articulation of the nation and the region by the respective states' elites. Hence, the evolution of these practices provides important insights into the political project for the region carried by the relevant actors. These case studies show how discourses frame social practices, how they are put-in-use and how the main representations are confronted by 'events', 'facts', or practices that can trigger change by making apparent the existing tensions in the dominant discourse.

It should be noted that pragmatic choices had to be made concerning the level of analysis chosen in this research which was constrained by the time frame of the fieldwork. It would have been ideal to interview a much greater number of actors involved in the practices of regionalisation of foreign and security policies to grasp all the micro-practices of these actors that give daily meaning to the process. However, this possibility was limited in this research which aims at getting a better understanding of the regionalisation process through a focus on the macro level of social structures. Both levels should be analysed in-depth but this would require much more extensive fieldwork. The solution to this problem was therefore a pragmatic

one: first, delimiting only two case studies of social practices; secondly, attempting to interview key actors within the main institutions to make sense of these practices and understand how they relate to more structural representations. The decision to choose only two case studies of social practices was motivated by Geertz's (1973, 23) warning of the specificity and circumstantiality of ethnographic research:

‘It is with the kind of material produced by long-term, mainly (though not exclusively) qualitative, highly participative, and almost obsessively fine-comb field study in confined contexts that the mega-concepts with contemporary social science is afflicted – legitimacy, modernization, integration, conflict, charisma, structure,...meaning – can be given the sort of sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely about them, but, what is more important, creatively and imaginatively with them.’

It is indeed through the detailed study of specific social practices that the meaning and path of regionalisation in South America and West Africa can better be grasped. However, in any case, ‘Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is’ (Geertz 1973, 29).

2. Delimitation and analysis of the data

i. The chronology of the case studies

The two regional practices, regional interventions and the regional management of transnational security issues, are examined from their beginning up until today. In the two regions both regional practices started in the 1990s. In the case of transnational security issues the doctoral thesis studies the evolution of the actors' practices throughout the whole period: the legal texts, the institutionalisation, the setting up of forums of interactions and networks, socialisation processes and so on. In the case of regional interventions the study looks at the overall evolution but illustrates it with significant instances of interventions such as in Côte d'Ivoire (2010) and Mali (2012)

in West Africa; Paraguay (1996, 1999) and Haiti in South America (2004). In both cases particular attention is also given to the development (or not) of regional agency: does the regional organisation initiate, coordinate and/or monitor these practices? Or is everything in the hands of the member states? This is revealing of the process of regionalisation as increased agency and autonomy of the regional organisation shows the construction of a regional community around consensually agreed regional norms.

Along this time frame these practices are contextualised within the ‘basic discourse(s)’ identified by the discourse analysis: how are these practices framed by the discourse(s)? Are they coherent with the dominant discourse or are they in tension with it? Do they draw on contesting discourse(s) and challenge the dominant discourse? Are they framed by the discourses of regional actors, by the discourses of ‘external’ actors or by both? What does that tell us about the regionalisation process in the two regions? Do these practices testify to the construction of a political regional community?

ii. The choice of data

The data used to analyse social practices differs from that used for the poststructuralist discourse analysis. While for discourse analysis the core of the data is official documents, supplemented by interviews and secondary documents such as conceptual histories, interpretative process tracing relies first on interviews supplemented by official documents and a wide range of secondary documents (press releases, press articles, policy analyses, scientific articles, etc.).

The interviews are used to grasp the meaning that regional actors attribute to the practices they are enacting; and thereby the meaning of these practices for the regionalisation of foreign and security policies. During ethnographic research, according to Balzacq (2011, 45) ‘the investigator conducts semi-structured interviews

to uncover the meaning people activate to make sense of their daily practices’, which is why ‘the components of ethnographic research are often used as a complement to discourse analysis’ (Balzacq 2011, 44). Wagenaar (2011, 251) also highlights that even though critical or poststructuralist discourse analysts believe that the essence of interpretative research is the analysis of texts, ‘interviews are often required to give context to the texts, particularly contemporary policy texts.’

Interviews are not always enough to uncover these meanings, especially when the field is complicated and/or sensitive to access which limits the amount of possible interviews. In these cases it is valuable to confront the interviews with a range of other primary and secondary documents. The reliance on multiple source of evidence is what is usually called ‘triangulating the data’ (Benett and Checkel 2011, 29; Pouliot 2007, 370). Official documents, press releases and articles are particularly important to have additional information on the meaning attributed to these practices. The use of policy analysis documents or scientific articles themselves based on interviews are also useful to have a better understanding of the context.

Finally, it should be noted that the material (texts and interviews) stemming from South America was translated by myself into English from Portuguese and Spanish; the quotes are therefore not in their original language. Conversely, the excerpts from the material collected in West Africa are reproduced here in their original version.

3. Accessing the field in West Africa and South America

i. Preparing and conducting the interviews

The preparation of the fieldwork was a relatively complicated task to the extent that I could not locate the officials I wanted to interview before being on the field. Indeed, the administrations I was targeting (the Brazilian diplomatic corps and armed forces; the Nigerian diplomatic corps, armed forces and the ECOWAS Commission) are non-

transparent institutions with no organograms indicated on the official web pages. In Brazil my entry point was the University of Brasilia where I was received as a visiting researcher under the supervision of Pr. Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau who introduced me to other professors and diplomats who themselves provided me with new contacts. The tight links between the academic and the diplomatic/political worlds in Brazil led to a rather straightforward ‘snowball process’ for my interviews which made me welcomed and rapidly trusted in the diplomatic institution, the Itamaraty. Military officers were, however, less easily accessible. I attended workshops, training events and seminars at the Brazilian Ministry of Defense in order to introduce myself and ask the keynote speakers and attendees for interviews. At the end, I interviewed a sufficient number of military officers with the exception of those working in the intelligence and strategy department who refused to be interviewed.

The situation was rather different in Nigeria as I was not part of any academic institution. Moreover, my stay only lasted one month in Abuja due to the security situation of the country. A contact at the European Union Delegation in Abuja became my ‘gatekeeper’ and provided me with an important number of contacts in the Nigerian administration and at ECOWAS; she also introduced me directly to many of them. Furthermore, I contacted the French Embassy asking for help and advice on my project. They took me to a number of meetings where I met officials from the ECOWAS Commission. While, the interviewing process at ECOWAS was rather comprehensive, it was more limited with the Nigerian administrations where the officials were difficult to access and secretive.

Hence, in both countries I relied on a ‘snowball technique’ of building an exponentially increasing network of respondents from an original subject (Guterson 2008, 98; Warren 2002, 87). Doing so, I relied on a number of ‘gatekeepers’ who

vouched for me with local officials (Guterson 2008, 96). In addition to these interviews, I also interviewed an important number of EU officials in Brasilia, Abuja and Brussels. Obtaining these interviews was quite straightforward as EU civil servants tend to consider this as part of their job. Overall, I conducted twenty-seven interviews with Brazilian officials and five with Nigerian officials (including politicians, diplomatic officials and military officers). Eleven interviews were done with ECOWAS officials (six of them were Nigerian). I also conducted twelve interviews with EU officials (ten working on West Africa and two on South America), and three with various Western officials. This made a total of 58 interviews.

Fieldwork preparation also concerns the cultural awareness necessary to conduct the interviews. Before undertaking my fieldwork I read extensively on Brazilian and Nigerian history and culture. As already mentioned I had the advantage of speaking English, French and Portuguese, which facilitated making contacts, not least as I was able to conduct the interviews in the officials' native language.⁵⁸ Furthermore, I was interviewing well-educated people (elites), which facilitated the interactions as they were relatively familiar with foreigners and researchers. However, whereas social interactions were easy in Brazil, they were more complicated in Nigeria where former colonial relations lead to suspicions and resentment towards Europeans. This context probably complicated my access to Nigerian officials. My strategy was to thoroughly inform them about my research project and make clear I was not working for a foreign institution but doing independent research. ECOWAS officials were easier to access as they were accustomed to dealing with foreigners to the extent that a great part of ECOWAS funding stems from international donors such as the EU.

⁵⁸ While in some occasions in Nigeria their native language was the local language, English was always their working language.

The interviews were all semi-structured. I used an interview guide as a reminder of the key topics I wanted to address. The questions concerned my general research questions but were at the same time very open in order to let the respondent speak, tell her/his stories, and avoid leading his answers (Bryman 2008, 471, Guterson 2008, 104, Balzacq 2011, 46). I avoided closed questions⁵⁹ to limit bias in the interview. The length of the interviews varied between twenty minutes to three hours with an average of fifty minutes. Most of them were recorded with the exception of a few cases where the respondents refused because of the sensitivity of the information. However, they were in general willing to be recorded, which was particularly useful for discourse analysis purposes. Even though I conducted a few phone/skype interviews, I avoided them as much as possible as the respondents have a tendency to end the conversation sooner and seem less willing to share their experiences and stories. During the whole interview process I used a method of ‘branching and building’ as coined by Guterson (2008, 104). Branching refers to the fact that interviews are tailored to individual interests and identities; building means that each interview is built upon earlier ones. At the end, while a common set of topics was addressed, the interviews differed substantially according to the respondents and along the interview process.

The question of the ethics and the anonymity of the interviewees was also crucial. When making contacts with potential respondents I sent on each occasion an information sheet explaining the purpose of my research, the kind of questions I was likely to ask, the length of the interview and the conditions of anonymity. When meeting for the interview I always took a few minutes to re-explain the purpose of my research and agree on the exact conditions under which I was going to reference

⁵⁹ Closed questions refer in general to questions that lead the respondent to answer by yes or no. They are questions that usually carry the interviewer’s preconceptions as they ask for a precise answer and not for the stories of the respondents.

them. I initially carried with me a consent sheet to obtain the signature of the officials interviewed. However, I rapidly stopped doing that due to the dislike it provoked. As Guterson (2008, 109) insightfully notices, in many developing countries, signing this kind of form means for an official to agree to inform a foreigner on his own country, which can be considered with strong suspicion. Hence, we generally had an oral agreement on the unfolding of the interviews and the conditions of anonymity (how they wanted to be referenced and quoted). I therefore consider informed consent as a dynamic and continuous process which does not have to be written as ‘human subjects are best protected not by inflexible bureaucratic codes but by ethnographers who think situationally about an internalized mandate to “do no harm”’ (Guterson 2008, 110).

An important question concerns when to stop the interview process. Ideally, researchers doing fieldwork give the advice to stop when you are able to predict to some extent the answer you will get to your questions which means you reached an understanding of the culture or social setting (Benett and Checkel 2011, 28-29; Guterson 2008, 107). Going through this process was my objective and I reached this point in Brazil as well as with ECOWAS. However, I was not able to completely reach this point with Nigerian officials and military officers. My stay in Nigeria was too short and the institutions too closed. Officials were suspicious about sharing insights on Nigeria’s foreign and security policy with a foreigner. I would have needed two to three more months of fieldwork that, mainly for security reasons,⁶⁰ I was not able to spend there. However, I interviewed a large number of Nigerian diplomatic and military staff working for the ECOWAS Commission (rotating from the Nigerian administration). What was striking was that, being at ECOWAS, they

⁶⁰ Inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts are increasingly affecting Nigeria, in particular in the North of the country with the Islamist sect Boko Haram.

were much more willing to talk with foreigners on Nigeria's foreign policy. This was very revealing of the role of ECOWAS in West Africa as a socialisation place framing the representations and practices of member states' staff. Eventually, I compensated the smaller amount of interviews with secondary sources: I interviewed officials from various embassies and international organisations working in Nigeria. While these interviews come from a particular standpoint 'external' to the region, they were useful in understanding the Nigerian administration – in addition to the use of secondary documents.

Finally, a last issue was that I was not able to interview similar types of actors in the two regions. I interviewed diplomatic officials and military officers from Brazil and Nigeria; however, in West Africa I interviewed officials from ECOWAS, which was not the case in South America with Mercosur and Unasur. While this might seem unbalanced, the main reason was that ECOWAS has an administration with permanent staff dealing with political and security issues. Conversely, Mercosur and Unasur only have meetings on a more or less *ad hoc* basis between envoys from the member states (I interviewed some of them in Brasilia). This is actually revealing of the regionalisation process: in West Africa, the regional organisation is developing an autonomous agency and – together with its member state actors – is participating in the process of regionalisation, while in South America the process is mainly in the hands of the member states.

ii. Meaning and analysis of the interviews

The objective of the interview process is to grasp how respondents frame and understand issues and events within their social world (Bryman 2008, 473). It is thus important to let the respondent speak about his own experiences and describe events he has witnessed, or encounters in which he took part. In the case of this research

project the stories correspond to experiences officials had in their institutions, events in which they took part (such as regional interventions, the elaboration or implementation of regional plans and strategies and so on), and encounters they had with colleagues throughout the region. The aim, through these individual accounts, is to be able to make thick descriptions of social patterns. Guterson (2008, 107) aptly puts it in these terms:

‘When we do fieldwork we note these practices and we record as much of the discourse as we can, looking for recurrent patterns. (...) [we] are really interested in the practices and discourses that transcend the level of the individual and, to put it in Foucauldian terms, provide the social material from which their individuality is constructed.’

Hence, these individual stories help us understand how social structures are put in use through actors’ practices, how they relate to the actors’ understandings and frame them.

Furthermore, as indicated in the first section of this chapter the interviews were analysed in two different ways, and which in turn also informed my questions during the interview process. First, I asked more general questions on the process of regionalisation: their understanding, opinion and participation in it. The aim here was to supplement my discourse analysis by looking at the concepts and articulations the respondents use and to give particular attention to the contradictions and instabilities of their discourse. Secondly, I asked questions on the two case studies: their thoughts about it, the description and participation to these social practices. The objective was therefore to understand what meaning these social practices have for them and for the regionalisation process in general. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the two types of questions informed both aspects of the research, as the discourses/practices interplay is so tightly interlinked that this division has a heuristic purpose that can only be maintained to a certain extent.

The method used for the analysis of the case studies differs from the discourse analysis and relates more to ethnographic research. As stated previously, the analysis stems from a dialogue between the theory and the data. Wagenaar (2011, 261) explains this process in these terms: 'Understanding isn't built up from data; rather, it results from the researcher struggling to understand the meaning of the data and, especially, how they relate to the researcher's questions and preliminary understandings.' In the case of this project, there was a dialogue not only between my first hypotheses, my theoretical framework and the data; but also between the first part of my method (discourse analysis) and the ethnographic data through the interpretative process tracing. This dialogue helped and informed my data collection and contributed to refining the theoretical framework and hypotheses. More practically, the method used to analyse the data consisted in what ethnographers refer to as 'coding' and 'memo writing.' For Wagenaar (2011, 261-62):

'A well-chosen, evocative coding creates a conceptual category that simultaneously describes and explains the data. In the process it also organizes the data by creating conceptual connections of which the researcher was until then unaware. The next step, memo writing, helps the researcher to make sense of the connections and explanatory suggestions that begin to emerge from the data.'

The coding is driven by the constant question of: what is this statement or interview section an instance of? Hence, asking oneself to which larger process or pattern a respondent's statement refers to (Wagenaar 2011, 263). This also enables a dialogue with the theoretical framework and the 'basic discourses' with questions such as: Is this statement/section an instance of the dominant discourse? Does it contradict it? Is it an instance of a competing or 'external' discourse?

Conclusion

To conclude, the methodology elaborated in this chapter can be divided into two clear stages. The first stage consists in analysing the discourses, making sense of the representations of the actors, and categorising them into clusters of ‘basic discourses’ in the way suggested by Hansen (2006).

The second step – the interpretative process tracing – aims at tracing how these ‘basic discourses’ enable or restrict certain regional practices. The objective is to find out why particular practices can be put to effect in one context rather than another; how they relate to the dominant and contesting discourse(s); how ‘internal’ and ‘external’ actors transfer their norms and concepts through their discourses and practices, and for which reasons they end up succeeding or failing. To do so, the interpretative process tracing relies on a wide range of primary and secondary documents enabling an in-depth analysis of the context and on ethnographic field research in the two regions.

The examination, in particular, of two case studies of social practices, regional interventions and the management of transnational security issues, provides more thorough information on the meaning and path of the regionalisation process in the two regions; for example, on whether a regional political community is emerging or not.

While not using a causal framework and therefore not subjected to verifiability or falsifiability procedures, the theoretical and methodological framework of this doctoral thesis aims at producing an analytical narrative that seeks to be as rigorous, systematic and empirically driven as possible in order to provide new insights on the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

Chapter 4. The International Relations literature on regional projects in South America and West Africa

Introduction

The empirical analysis of this doctoral thesis starts with a condensed literature review of the IR literature on regional projects in South America and West Africa. While this can appear unusual, this chapter is driven by two rationales.

On the one hand, the comparison between the objective/material and ideational factors used for explanatory purpose in the two regions shows the limits of causal frameworks to explain regionalisation. These factors often lead to contradictory conclusions on the same region or across the two regions. They do not explain why, even though exposed to similar types of factors (security issues, regional powers, etc.), West Africa and South America are taking very different paths in terms of regionalisation. Indeed, whereas a regional political community is emerging in West Africa around consensual regional norms and rules, and a redefinition of sovereignty and non-interference which opens the way for the possibility of regional intervention, in South America regionalisation is rather premised on coexistence and cooperation between strictly sovereign states. Exploring the explanations accounting for this difference will be the object of the next three chapters. This chapter shows how academic predictions about regionalisation in West Africa and South America have been off the mark precisely because of their attempts to extrapolate regionalisation dynamics from presumably objective/material and ideational factors. It already highlights that this difference cannot be explained without giving attention to the representations of the relevant actors, as was argued in chapters one and two.

On the other hand, the second rationale concerns the fact that this academic literature also (re)produces a normative securitising discourse which participates in the constitution of the regionalisation process. Indeed, by establishing a direct causal link between ‘new threats’ and the regional project they contribute to making regionalisation a rational and necessary answer to security issues. As such, the academic literature is also part of the empirical process.

The first section of this chapter reviews the most common objective/material and ideational factors used by the IR literature. The second section looks more particularly at the security factor and how the normative securitising academic discourse works in West Africa and South America. The third section concerns how the IR literature conceptualises the actors of the regionalisation process as objective factors.

I. The ‘factors’ of regionalisation

This part reviews the objective/material and ideational factors most cited by the literature on regional projects in West Africa and South America and shows how the conclusions drawn are often contradictory across the literature and in view of the empirics.

1. Objective/material factors

The end of the Cold War and the following structural changes are often used in the IR literature to explain the evolution of regional projects, including the development of their security dimension. The common view for West Africa is that the end of the Cold War led to the neglect of the region by the great powers and the international community, with the consequence that West African states were left alone to deal with their conflicts and crises (Bah 2005, 78-79; Francis 2006, 13; Terwase Sampson

2011, 511; Bolaji 2011, 185). This new situation created a necessity and new opportunities for West African states to tackle their conflicts by themselves, therefore leading to joint regional efforts (Bolaji 2011, 185; Babarinde 2012, 275; Iwilade and Agbo 2012, 464). The argument is similar in South America; the end of the Cold War led to the US' loss of interest in South America where their involvement and support to the governments – mostly against the 'communist threat' – largely decreased. South American states thus used this opportunity to increase their autonomy vis-à-vis the US through regionalisation, and to develop their own security agenda (Hurrell 1998, 247-249; Buzan and Waever 2003, 325-327; Malamud 2010, 645; Mosinger 2012, 167; Trinkuna 2013, 84). The end of the Cold War was indeed a major turning point that altered conditions in both regions and helped to trigger new regional initiatives; however, as a factor it does not particularly explain the different paths taken by the regionalisation process in the two regions. While both regions were affected by this structural change with a reduced involvement of the great powers, the different outcome – a regional political community in West Africa in contrast to cooperation between sovereign states in South America – cannot be understood as directly caused by this shift.

Other objective factors are also commonly used to explain regional projects such as economic factors, democratisation, civil-military relations, and so on. The general line of argument refers to West African states as belonging to the group of least developed countries, mostly weak states with formal democracies suffering from regular coup d'état. Accordingly, their lack of economic resources and political capacity limit their ability to enter a 'real' regionalisation process and deal jointly with regional security issues (Francis 2006, 18; Francis 2009, 90; Arthur 2012, 4). Even when the role of ECOWAS in the region is acknowledged, these factors are

seen as strongly hindering the regionalisation process (Franke 2010, 124; Bolaji 2011, 186). Conversely, in South America a liberal argument that establishes a connexion between democratisation, improved civil-military relations, economic interdependence, peace and regional integration is made by most of scholars working on the region (Hurrell 1998, 253; Pion Berlin 2005, 212; Kalil Mathias, Cavaller Guzzi and Avelar Giannini 2008, 2; Oelsner 2011, 190-191; Mosinger 2012, 167). Buzan and Waever (2003, 320) stress, for instance, the role of democratisation, the decrease of military influence on politics, as well as neoliberal reforms in a context of globalisation to explain the transformation of the southern cone regional security complex into a security community. Flermes (2005, 218) clearly links democratisation, regional integration and security policy. The rationale driving this connection draws on the following argument: regional integration was utilised to stabilise the new democracies in the 1990s by shifting political power from militaries to civilians and fostering economic interdependence between the countries; the aim was also to build trust in order to maintain peace and stability in the region which would in turn strengthen the democracies (by reducing the influence of the military) as well as economic development. Hence, in theory, the conditions are more favourable to regional integration in South America than in West Africa. In the latter region, the weak, militarised and under-developed states would have no rationale and/or capacity to do so. This conclusion strongly clashes with the empirical processes unfolding in both regions.

This academic argument is further strengthened by discussions on the role attributed to national institutions in regionalisation processes. For West Africa the emphasis is put on the weakness of national institutions, the tendency of governments to be obsessed with regime survival and national sovereignty – inasmuch as they do

not really possess sovereignty – and ‘neo-patrimonialism’ or ‘tribalism’ as the common way of governing (Soderbaum 2004, 426; Haacke and Williams 2008, 214; Bolaji 2011, 185; Jackson 2012, 118). Hence, from this perspective the establishment or emergence of a regional entity – whether a security complex, a security community or a regional security arrangement – is assumed to be rather unlikely or seriously hindered by this central problem. Within the frame of their RSC approach, Buzan and Waever (2003, 232) argue that the presence of weak states hinders patterns of securitisation in West Africa because these patterns are not attached to the state system – the risk being implosion and ‘back to the future scenarios’ i.e. a return to a pre-colonial anarchical period of fragmentation. For Keller (1997, 292) as well weak states are a problem for the development of regional orders. Coming from the New Regionalism Approach, Soderbaum (2004, 426) emphasises the inherent weakness of postcolonial states in Africa obsessed with sovereignty, borders and non-intervention and therefore the limits of regionalism in this part of the world. Finally, both Francis (2006, 18) and Haacke and Williams (2008, 221) believe that without strong and modern states no security integration could succeed. It would first need transformation at the domestic level. The argument developed by all these authors implies that there is a linear continuity from modern-nation states to regional integration, which is highly debatable in particular in the case of West Africa.

This common line of argument explaining West African regionalisation is difficult to understand when looking at the empirics in the region. While West African states can, for the most part, be considered weak states, West Africa is also one of the regions where the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention are shifting the most. Regional norms, strategies and interventions are constantly redefining these principles. Some scholars such as Franke (2010, 124) and Thonke and Spliid (2012,

57-58) acknowledge this transformation but present it as a surprising trend in this context.

By contrast, scholars consider South American nation-states as relatively well-functioning modern states – in any case stronger than in West Africa. However, they highlight that the sovereignty principle is the dominant norm in South America and consequently an impediment to regionalisation (Herz 2010, 598, 610; Oelsner 2011, 196). Flesher and Radsek (2012, 155) insist that ‘national sovereignty is still the clearly dominant underlying norm of South American regional politics in general and South American security affairs in particular.’ According to Malamud (2012, 178, 180-182) regionalism in South America is used to strengthen national sovereignty and not to pool it, making ‘real’ regional integration impossible. Indeed, this reflects the on-going trend in the region.

The comparison between the IR literature thus raises the following question: are strong national institutions and states with ‘real’ sovereignty a requirement for regionalisation or is it an obstacle for its development? The core issue with the IR literature here is not that these factors are unimportant but how they are conceptualised as having a direct effect on the process of regionalisation. The existence of weak or strong institutions plays a role – for instance concerning the implementation of regional rules. Nevertheless, the key question to be asked is: is the regional project seen as coherent with the national project or not, in which way and to which extent? The importance of this articulation was underlined in chapter two. Indeed, if seen as coherent, the sovereignty principle and/or weak national institutions are not an obstacle for the regionalisation process as can be witnessed in West Africa. If articulated as incoherent, even the presence of strong national institutions able to implement regional rules does not provide for the possibility of regionalisation as in

the South American case. The following empirical chapters will further elaborate this point.

2. Ideational factors

The first chapter showed how ideational factors are conceptualised in the IR literature as providing complementary causal explanations to material factors. Academic works on security communities, regional security complexes or regionalism often cite the (non) existence of common historical experiences, values or identity to explain the success or failure of the process. In the case of West Africa, Franke (2009, 2; 2010, 123) stresses the presence of shared values, collective identities, and convergence of norms fostering shared meaning and the generation of collective interests. They find their origin, according to him, in common historical experiences, aspirations and ideologies such as Pan-Africanism, which enables the establishment of a security community. Similarly, Bah (2005, 79) emphasises the positive impact of shared historical and cultural values on the development of a security community in West Africa. Jaye (2008, 155) for his part insists on the ‘West Africanness’ stemming from historical patterns of regionalisation since pre-colonial kingdoms, which led to a shared sense of culture, history and experience among West African states that transcended colonial borders. All these accounts present regionalisation as a self-evident process and the result of a common historical path and a shared culture. However, surprisingly, other scholars stress instead the heterogeneity and divergence of West African states and present West Africa as the most divided region in Africa. Arthur (2010, 16) analyses the consequences of the Anglophone/Francophone divide, which creates tensions in the region; while Bolaji (2011, 186) and Francis (2009, 89-90) more generally underline the ethnic divisions as well as the differences in terms

of colonial heritage (French, English and Portuguese) and the repercussions of this on the language and the political systems of the region.

Similarly, in the case of South America, a large part of the literature explains regional security governance or security regionalism as a result of the existence of shared values, historical experiences and common threat perceptions. Flesher (2005, 217-218) stresses their common identity rooted in their historical experiences and cultural context. Other authors such as Oelsner (2011, 190) and Fuch (2006, 32) comment on the shared democratic values of South American countries. The specificity of the South American security environment that leads to common security perceptions is also often emphasised (Oelsner 2009, 194, 197; Herz 2010, 399). However, many authors seeking to demonstrate the limits of security regionalism use the opposite argument. Hurrell (1998, 231) argues that Latin America in general is not an area with shared values, language and culture. He highlights in particular Brazil's distinctiveness and the historically embedded identities that can explain Brazil's and Argentina's foreign policy divergence today. Pion Berlin (2005, 213) and Flesher and Radsek (2012, 177) underscore the conflicting national interests of South American countries which limit the effectiveness of security governance structures, while several scholars stress the different threat perceptions of the key actors in the region (Diamint 2010, 664; Flesher and Radsek 2012, 177; Trinkunas 2013, 84). These authors usually establish a dichotomy between, on the one side, national interests, and on the other side, community interests or identities as two opposite poles: national interest is supposed to be selfish, whereas community interest is inherently altruistic.⁶¹ Buzan and Wæver's (2003, 318) argument that South America is united at the level of ideas and ideals but fragmented at the level of

⁶¹ This dichotomy can also be found in the literature on West Africa (Tavares 2010, 146; Jackson 2012, 121).

interests illustrates this dichotomy; as well as Mares (1997, 208) for whom the main issue for regional security is that Latin American states put their national interest above the community interest.

Hence, the cultural and historical background of West Africa and South America can be interpreted in various ways: either stressing shared values and identities or showing their heterogeneity and the diverging interests of the states. None of these interpretations are essentially wrong and arguments can be given to support each of them. However, the effect of these ideational factors depends on how the actors participating in the regionalisation process interpret and give meaning to these factors through their discourses and practices – usually to support their political project for the region. Shared identities, values and culture are crucial to understand regionalisation but they do not exist by themselves; they are political and social constructs produced by the actors and constrained by particular structures. Accordingly, analysis should shift to the study of the relevant actors' representations of the nation, the region and security, and to how these concepts are articulated in their discourse, which was highlighted in chapters two and three. This move enables the analysis both to go beyond the material/ideational dichotomy, as well as the national/community interest one. Indeed, interests are not given and unchanging, national interests are not inherently selfish, while neither are community nor regional ones essentially altruistic. National interests are constantly (re)produced together with identities and can therefore be constructed as coherent with regional identity and interests or as in opposition with them.

To conclude, these objective/material and ideational factors do not account for the development of regionalisation either in West Africa or in South America. Interestingly, the IR literature on West Africa is often more pessimistic than the

literature on South America. While the literature on South America often argues that South American regional projects are the most advanced after the EU (Malamud and Schmitter 2011, 135; Malamud 2010, 650; Mosinger 2012, 163); empirically West Africa is the region undergoing a real shift with the emergence of a political community. This contrast shows how a framework based on the causal effects of material and ideational factors can be misleading.

II. Security and regionalisation

Most scholarly work on regionalisation in West Africa and South America cites security as one of the core factors explaining the process. The security factor deserves a specific section to discuss its impact because of its importance in the IR literature, and because I argue here that the IR literature produces a particular discourse on regions and security that also constitutes the regionalisation process in both regions.

1. Security and regionalisation: a deterministic link

Security issues are conceptualised in West Africa and South America as a direct causal factor of regionalisation. It is taken for granted that these issues are increasingly transnational, in particular the so-called ‘new threats’ including drug and other illegal trafficking, organised crime and terrorism. States are depicted as interdependent for their security and stability and thus compelled to take joint action to ensure their own security.

This argument is particularly strong in the case of West Africa. The situation there is envisaged in terms of security interdependence and the transnationalisation of security threats in a regional (in)security complex (Keller 1997, 300; Bah 2005, 78; Kaplan 2006, 81-82; Arthur 2010, 3; Iwilade and Agbo 2012, 362; Thonke and Spliid 2012, 44). On the one hand, the civil wars in Liberia (1989-1996) and Sierra

Leone (1991-2002) are recurrently cited as illustrating the risk of the spill over of conflicts spreading across the region and endangering its stability (Keller 1997, 130; Bah 2005, 78; Francis 2006, 14; 2009, 91; Arthur 2010, 14). On the other hand, transnational threats, including drug, human and small arms and light weapons (SALW) trafficking, terrorism and piracy are described as destabilising already weak states and threatening democracy in the region (Kaplan 2006, 81-82; Bolaji 2011, 185-186; Jackson 2012, 119-120). Hence, most authors conclude that common action in the framework of ECOWAS is the natural and necessary answer to deal with this security environment (Keller 1997, 308; Arthur 2010, 3, 14; Terwase Simpson 2011, 507; Thonke and Spliid 2012, 48). The assumption, therefore, is that common security issues lead to common security perceptions, which provides a basis for joint action.⁶² In this way, Ilheduru (2012, 218) argues that transnational security challenges have resulted in a shared security culture and forced an unplanned evolution of ECOWAS towards a security dimension. Bolaji (2011, 186) also emphasises that these transnational security flows compel each state to conceive of its stability and security as being linked to its neighbours, which informs the idea of a regional security dynamic.

The academic arguments on regional security in South America are similar. Most authors highlight the ‘new threats’ that South American countries are facing, in particular drug trafficking, organised criminality and terrorism. They insist on the transnational, cross border nature of these security issues, mostly at the Triple Border between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay and in Amazonia (Buzan and Waever 2003, 309-310; Show 2003, 124-126; Pion Berlin 2005, 216-217; Flandes and Radseck

⁶² This is a common argument used by scholars to stress the positive development of ECOWAS’ security dimension. By contrast, and as discussed in the first section of this chapter, some argue that West African states are too weak to develop and implement this dimension in ECOWAS – the only consensual security perception being regime survival – which shows again the contradictions of this literature.

2012, 160; Marcella 2013, 70). Authors present this interdependence as weakening the nation-states and endangering regional stability and democracy (Pion-Berlin 2005, 216-217; Flesmes and Radseck 2012, 156; Marcella 2013, 69). Marcella (2013, 71), for instance depicts Latin America as one of the most dangerous regions in the world. From there he stresses the need for a redefinition of security and common action, and argues that a consensus for collective action is emerging. This argument is widely shared in the literature. Buzan and Waever (2003, 338) observe that patterns of securitisation reinforce cooperation. These patterns are assumed to be particularly strong in the Southern Cone, which can be called a security community, whereas South America has supposedly reached the stage of a security regime. According to Pion Berlin (2005, 213) these challenges have led to security cooperation and a collective understanding of security as an indivisible good. For Oelsner (2011, 93) Mercosur is a (informal) security actor reflecting these regional security dynamics. In all these accounts, regional securitisation and desecuritisation processes are seen to have led to convergence and the development of shared perceptions driving regional governance. When authors occasionally stress the difference of threat perceptions between the states of the region it is to underline their non-responsiveness to the realities of their security environment, which explains the weakness of regional security projects (Diamint 2010, 664; Flesmes and Radseck 2012, 177)

Hence, in both regions the literature presents regional security governance, the emergence of a security community or any other type of regional project as a direct outcome of the increasing transnational nature of security issues and the consequent interdependence of states, which fosters common threat perceptions. However, this tells us little about the differences between the regionalisation processes on going in the two regions. Why and how are states in West Africa constructing a common

understanding of security issues, elaborating regional plans and strategies and launching joint interventions; while South American states are only committed to limited cooperation?⁶³ One could argue that security issues are more pressing in West Africa. However, in the IR literature transnational security issues in South America, in particular drug trafficking, are also presented as endangering the nation states, their governance capacities and democracy in general. Moreover, if one looks at regionalisation processes in other African sub-regions with similar security problems, such a major qualitative shift in regionalisation cannot be witnessed.⁶⁴ I am not arguing here that security issues are not a key factor in these regional developments; they provide a context to the regionalisation process, as we will see particularly in the case of West Africa. Nevertheless, it is important to stress again that they cannot be reduced to a causal factor with a direct effect on the process, since this effect depends on the meaning given to them by the relevant actors of the regionalisation process; in particular via their articulation of nation, region and security. The representations of these actors condition the way they are responding to these security issues through their foreign and security policies – they constitute these ‘facts’ as pressing security issues that require either national or regional action – and thus frame the regionalisation process. Illustratively, Brazilian officials have an understanding of drug trafficking and organised crime as public security issues that should be tackled

⁶³ This is not to say that there are no problems in the elaboration and implementation of these actions in West Africa, neither that there are no efficient cooperative actions in South America. However, there is a qualitative difference in the way they handle these security issues regionally: whereas West African governments do not hesitate to discuss and address these issues at a regional level, South American governments engage restrictively and occasionally at the regional level. This contrast will be the object of the next empirical chapters.

⁶⁴ ECOWAS is one of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) integrated into the African Union (AU) framework along with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), etc. These RECs are the central elements of the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and are supposed to develop their own standby forces (among other things) under the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF). ECOWAS is by far the REC with the most developed security dimension.

by their police forces guided by national policies. Border cooperation is seen as occasionally useful but should not be institutionalised, which restricts the regionalisation process.

2. An academic discourse on regionalisation

Beyond the deterministic link it establishes between security and regional projects, an important part of this IR literature can be considered as a normative securitising discourse on regionalisation by presenting it as a necessity for the survival – or at least the stability – of the region, its states and the population. Many of these accounts draw on the vocabulary and concepts of the Regional Security Complexes literature, which became mainstream to describe regional security dynamics in terms of security interdependence and securitisation.

As already described, the literature on West Africa emphasises the catastrophic conditions of the region torn by civil wars and recurrent coup d'états, and further destabilised by transnational threats. Many predictive scenarios for the future of the region sound rather pessimistic, pointing to the risk of implosion and potential 'back to the future' scenarios which implies that the (de)colonisation period might only be an interlude instead of a permanent point of transformation from a pre-modern period to a modern one (Buzan and Waever 2003, 220-221).⁶⁵ The danger would be the collapse of the Westphalian experiment in Africa or, in any case, that the inherent weakness of these states hinders their development into full-fledged modern states (Keller 1997, 300-302; Buzan and Waever 2003, 221; Soderbaum 2004, 426). Hence, whether arguing for pessimistic or optimistic scenarios most scholars describe West Africa as an essentially dangerous and unstable region. Interestingly, the influence of

⁶⁵ Buzan and Waever refer themselves to classical analyses of the African state such as the ones written by Daniel Bach (1995) and Jean-François Bayart (1999).

the 1994 essay of journalist Robert D. Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy*,⁶⁶ on this literature is noticeable through the intertextual links existing between this nodal text and more recent analyses of West Africa. Kaplan describes West Africa as an anarchical region in a permanent state of war posing a threat for the world and international security, as well as a mirror for what ‘the political character of our planet is likely to be in the twenty-first century (Kaplan 1994, 1). Sometimes implicitly taken as a reference by scholars (Jackson 2013, 118; Kaplan 2006, 81-82), he is also directly cited – still today – by political scientists who specialise on the region (Francis 2006, 13; Arthur 2010, 3). Francis presents the region as a ‘violent and ‘bad neighbourhood’ with ‘weak and collapsed states’ and references Kaplan’s essay (2009, 89). All these accounts of West Africa echo Kaplan’s (1994, 2) argument that:

‘West Africa is becoming the symbol of worldwide demographic, environmental, and societal stress, in which criminal anarchy emerges as the real “strategic” danger. Disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, refugee migrations, the increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders, and the empowerment of privates armies, security firms, and international drug cartels are now most tellingly demonstrated through a West African prism.’

A consensual solution is drawn from this representation of the region’s security environment, which consists in the development of common action at the regional level. In West Africa, ECOWAS should contribute to the peace and stability of the region through policies and actions based on the security and development nexus. This security and development nexus is conceptualised by scholars as essential and inextricable, and as the only way to deal with this anarchic security environment and save the region from collapse.⁶⁷ Hence, most of the works already cited in this chapter

⁶⁶ In 2000 Kaplan published a book with the same title including this essay among others.

⁶⁷ The security and development nexus and its connection to regional integration is part of an international community discourse produced by many international actors such as the EU and the UN.

elaborate a narrative linking regionalisation, security and development as the remedy to this ‘bad neighbourhood’. Jaye (2008, 152) argues that the organisation became concerned with peace and regional security because they are necessary for the socio-economic development of the member states.’ Bah (2005, 78) emphasises in the same way that ‘ECOWAS realised the symbiotic relationship between economic development and security, as well as the interdependence of the elements of security relationships in the region.’ Regionalisation is often presented as the only rational solution for the region: ‘Helping long-troubled regions such as West Africa requires nothing less than embracing a new development paradigm. Instead of trying to fix a plethora of dysfunctional governments one by one, efforts might be concentrated to build up a strong regional organization’ (Kaplan 2006, 82). Francis (2006, 7) goes even further by asserting ‘the imperative to engage with the link between peace, security and development (henceforth the “nexus”); stressing that the ‘inextricable link between economic regionalism and security integration highlights the fact that it is impossible to achieve the economic growth and development objectives of integration in an environment of wars, armed conflicts and perpetual political instability.’

In the South American case the link established between regionalisation and security insists less on survival but is still described as a necessity for the stability and prosperity of the region. Indeed, while not being depicted as anarchic and inherently dangerous as for West Africa, South America is also presented as being destabilised by transnational threats and organised criminality. Even more, certain areas where states’ borders meet in the Amazonian region and at the Triple border are described as areas controlled by criminal groups, which are potential safe havens for terrorists

Its influence in West Africa will be further explored in this chapter as well as in the following empirical chapters.

(Pion-Berlin 2005, 216; Flandes 2006, 164). Flandes and Radseck (2012, 156) present South American frontiers as ‘hot spots’ because ‘traditional and new threats tend to overlap and mutually intensify one another in these often poorly patrolled spaces.’ The example of the Triple Border is recurrent to illustrate a ‘lawless area’ with poor state control, illicit activities such as arms and drug trade, money laundering, fake goods, and Muslim communities financing terrorist activities; similarly, the frontiers between Ecuador, Venezuela and Brazil are supposed to have the highest murder rates in the region⁶⁸ (Flandes and Radseck 2012, 160). Trinkunas (2013, 84) argues that ‘Organized crime, narcotics, smuggling, gangs, and other violent nonstate actors are the main threat to security, and in some cases, give rise to the talk about failed states.’ The risks stemming from this security environment are presented in the IR literature as multidimensional and interconnected: they could destabilise democracy through corruption, worsen relationships between governments because of frontiers issues, and foster a re-empowerment of the military through their increased involvement in public security issues in South American states. This environment also has an impact on economic development and prosperity, which could potentially weaken democracy. These interconnected risks could overlap, trigger or reinforce domestic political crises that could compromise the political stability of the sub-region as a whole (Flandes and Radseck 2012, 156). An underlying narrative linking security, democracy and economic prosperity as interdependent with the potential to trigger a vicious or virtuous circle is thus recurrent in the IR literature on South America.

This narrative is constantly connected to another concept, regional integration or regionalism, as was already shown in the previous section when discussing the

⁶⁸ Marcella (2013, 72) adds that Latin America has the highest murder-rates in the world: with only 8% of the world’s population, 42% of the murders in the world occur in Latin America. Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil count among the most dangerous countries.

objective factors of regionalisation. Regional integration is presented at the forum that enables states to connect these different dimensions and tackle these interdependent aspects and problems. Show (2003, 124) emphasises that in the new millennium 'regional order and security have increasingly come to be defined in terms of collective defense of democracy and the promotion of liberal economic reform and regional integration.' Flandes (2005, 218) highlights that one of the main characteristics of the political evolution of South America in the last two decades is the tight relation between democratisation, regional integration and security policy. Pion Berlin (2005, 220) argues that 'Without being in a deterministic relation, the economic and security interactions mutually reinforce one another'; and Kalil Mathias, Cavaller Guzzi and Avelar Giannini (2008, 2) state that 'integration [in particular in the area of defense] and democracy are correlated and interdependent phenomena, in this sense [the] more integration you have, [the] more democracy you get.'

The narrative also goes together with an observation of, or a general recommendation for, an expanded understanding of security in the region. For Show (2003, 123) the US and Latin America have a common agenda of security concerns that includes considerations of human rights, democracy, environment, government reform, social equality, free market environment: 'By employing a broader definition of security and restructuring multilateral organizations to address these concerns, Latin American states hope to avoid such negative externalities [human rights abuses, refugee flows, reduced trade, etc.] stemming from regional conflict'. Marcella (2013, 68-69) links this expanded concept to development and human security: 'Security constitutes a multidimensional condition for the development and progress of their nations. (...). Security is indispensable.' Indeed,

‘Crime can result from the interaction of a number of factors: availability of guns, international criminal drug-related violence, contraband, and money laundering, all in conjunction with the proliferation of criminal gangs and weak institutional capabilities (...). Poverty, social exclusion, the youth bulge and the prevalence of official corruption multiply the problem’ (Marcella 2013, 74).

The lesson to be drawn from the emergence of this ‘post-westphalian order’ is the necessity to reduce, if not eliminate, ‘the distinction between the domestic and international domains of sovereignty and requires a broadening of the concepts of public security and national defence (Marcella 2013, 69). Herz (2010, 605) also asserts this necessity:

‘The expanded concept of security allowed for a focus on the “new security threats” and risks emerging with the intensification of the globalization process. These threats transcend state borders (...). They require new forms of cooperation between states and sub-governmental and non-state actors. The interdependence between economic, social, political and environmental issues and the threat and use of violence has become clearer. In this context, it becomes acceptable for narcotics and small arms trafficking, intra-state violence and institutional state failure to be addressed as security threats in regional and international forums.’

Hence, this expanded concept of security put the emphasis on a multidimensional vision of security including military, economic, political, social and environmental issues. It also advises for a merging of public security and defence to deal with the multidimensional character of threats and reinforced regional cooperation. However, some authors also take a strong stance against it such as Pion Berlin (2005, 216).

Interestingly, this academic discourse has strong intertextual links with one of the two official ‘basic discourses’ in South America which is challenging the dominant discourse that hinders the regionalisation process, as we will see in the next chapter. By contrast, in West Africa, this academic discourse relates to the hegemonic discourse which promotes regionalisation.

To conclude, in both cases, regionalisation (whatever the form it takes in the literature) is represented as necessary for the region, whether for its mere survival (West Africa) or for its stability and prosperity (South America). The literature produces a general narrative linking security and development with regionalisation in West Africa; and a narrative linking an expanded concept of security with democracy, economic development and regionalisation in South America. It is important to understand this academic discourse as part of the process of regionalisation. It asserts regionalisation as inevitable, necessary and even natural to comprehensively address the problems faced by the states in the region. However, it is important to deconstruct this 'naturalness' attributed to regionalisation. Regionalisation is but one among other possible policies to address these issues to the extent that states have a range of available options such as strengthening and increasingly monitoring their borders, or cooperating bilaterally with their neighbouring states without engaging in a process of regionalisation. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), for instance, between the US, Canada and Mexico only involves a free trade agreement. The US has engaged in an almost unilateral reinforcement of controls and security at its borders with Mexico to deal with illegal immigration and transnational security issues such as drug trafficking. This is not to say that regionalisation is not an efficient or good solution to deal with the security environment of both regions, but only that it is not the only possible existing policy; particularly because it can also be seen as threatening for the sovereignty of the states. This normative securitising discourse on regionalisation is (re)produced by the IR literature but also by international community actors such as the UN and the EU, great powers and major donors such as the USA, France and the UK, as we will see when analysing the discourses of the 'external' actors. The aim is to understand how and to which extent this discourse

constitutes the regionalisation process: which actors carry this discourse and with what influence; how regional actors adapt, assimilate or react to it? The next part of this chapter further discusses this question.

III. The actors of regionalisation

The IR literature on regional projects in West Africa and South America also treats the international community (international actors in general) and regional powers as objective factors with a causal effect on the regionalisation process. It ignores how the discourses and practices of actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the region actually constitute the process – in a non-deterministic manner – through the meaning they attribute to material and ideational factors, thereby fostering their particular political project for the region.

1. The International Community

The influence of the international community on the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America is generally poorly problematised. While there is an acknowledgement that some international actors play an important role in these regions, the analysis of the mechanisms and effect of this encounter between ‘external’ and regional actors is not well developed – how, for instance, do these ‘external’ actors try to frame the regionalisation process, its form and meaning; why do they succeed or fail?

In the West African case, Keller (1997, 310) acknowledges the support of the UN community to building regional conflict management capacities; so does Francis (2009, 107) who considers the UN as having vital importance in explaining the effectiveness of ECOWAS in peace and security. Some go as far as to say that African governance is externally driven (Jackson 2012, 116). Indeed, as a result of

the scarcity of their resources, the states are compelled to ask for funding contributions, which limit the autonomy of their security agenda (Babarinde 2011, 294-295). This is often viewed in a negative light, fuelled by the idea of the international community enforcing its vision of governance. Thus, Soderbaum (2004, 423) argues that the international community promotes and enforces neoliberal regional governance in Africa, which leads to accusations of external interference and the imposition of foreign goals and strategies (Jackson 2012, 126; Iwilade and Agbo 2012, 364). Scholars further argue that the regionalisation process in Africa is driven by European knowledge production. Instead, regional integration in Africa should be driven by African specificities and be grounded in a development paradigm centred on human capabilities and security adapted to Africa (Motsamai and Qobo 2012, 145). Francis (2006, 18) therefore criticises ECOWAS for trying to imitate the EU and the OSCE models rather than exploring strategies to link the security and development nexus in a context-specific and historically relevant way adapted to African realities.

Hence, in spite of these criticisms of the international community's role in West Africa, these scholars do not engage with the question of how and to which extent these 'external' actors constitute the regionalisation process in West Africa. The academic discourse on regions, security and development analysed, as was mentioned previously, is not limited to academic circles, it is also (re)produced by many of these 'external' actors. I do not seek to analyse in this dissertation where and by which institution this discourse was initiated but, more precisely, its effect on the regionalisation of foreign and security policies, its form and its meaning for regional actors. This will be one of the key objects of study in the following empirical chapters. Authors like Francis (2006, 18) and Motsamai and Qobo (2012, 145) call

for new strategies that should adapt to ‘African realities’. This shows a lack of awareness that the discourses and practices of these ‘external’ (international community) actors – producing the articulation of concepts that these authors themselves employ – are part of these realities: they participate in constituting the meaning and therefore the form of the regionalisation process. The security and development nexus advocated by most authors as the panacea of ‘local solutions’ is itself an element articulated by this discourse, which frames the regional process. The key question is thus: how and why do regional actors assimilate, adapt or react to these articulations in their own discourses and practices? What is the effect of this encounter on the constitution of the region? This takes us far from the mainstream analysis that West African security governance is dependent and externally driven. The process is much more complex than what this argument implies; regional actors are important actors in this interplay. For instance, some authors point to the fact that the international community shapes regionalisation at the normative level. Thus, Keller (1997, 309) has shown that the UN community has contributed to a rethinking of sovereignty and non-interference. Likewise, Terwase Sampson (2012, 508-509) argues that the Responsibility to Protect⁶⁹ has been institutionalised in ECOWAS as a result of the UN’s influence. However, they do not analyse how this has been made possible, through which social mechanisms and interactions with regional actors. There are only very limited accounts on the complex power relations between West Africa and the international community, except from an acknowledgement of the

⁶⁹ The responsibility to protect (R2P) is an emerging norm promoted by United Nations claiming that sovereignty also entails responsibility for states to protect their population. It focuses on the prevention of four crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. If the state does not fulfil this responsibility, the international community – and in this case the regional community – would in principle have the responsibility to do it through coercive measures.

financial constraints that make West Africa more sensitive to this influence. The comparison, in the following chapters, between West Africa, where Nigeria's representations converge with the EU's discourse, and South America, where Brazil's representations are in tensions with those of the 'external' actors involved in the region, show this agency of regional actors and its effect on the process. Finally, most scholars vaguely refer to 'the international community,' 'the west' or the 'UN community' but do not provide a specific analysis of the impact of these actors. They mostly ignore the role of the EU, which as the 'model' regional organisation, an active promoter of its norms, and the provider of the largest amount of funding to ECOWAS' peace and security architecture, decisively participates in the constitution of the regionalisation process.

Turning to South America, here the IR literature studying regional projects focuses mostly on the influence of the US, the OAS, and of the EU as a model of regional integration. On the one hand, the mainstream assumption is that regionalisation in South America has been constructed against the US in order for South American states to have greater room for manoeuvre and negotiation, as well as to limit the involvement of the US in the regional security agenda (Hurrell 1998, 247-249; Buzan and Waever 2003, 338; Flermes and Radseck 2012, 161-162; Mosinger 2012, 165). On the other hand, most authors also claim that South American states share the same wide and multidimensional conception of security as the other Latin American states and the US. However, this wider security concept, it is argued, emerged within the OAS and is actively promoted by the US to justify its involvement in the region to fight drug trafficking and terrorism (Show 2003, 123-124; Herz 2010, 599, 605).

These two main arguments raise some tensions. Firstly, it is debatable to assert that South American governments share this view of security. We will see in chapter six that Brazil tends to reject this view. Secondly, as mentioned this wider concept of security is also part of the academic narrative linking democracy, economic development and regionalisation in South America. Hence, regionalisation is supposed to be constructed against the US and its instrument, the OAS, to foster the independence and sovereignty of South American states; and, at the same time, regionalisation is part of a narrative which, by advocating this wider concept of security and stressing the interdependence of South American countries, favours the involvement of the US in South America – also through the merging of security and defence, which separation enable to keep the ‘new security threats’ as purely internal issues. Several authors discuss the danger of this wider vision of security: Pion Berlin (2005, 216-219) underlines the risk for South American states of being drawn into a hemispheric-wide campaign against ‘new security threats’, led by the US and militarising the response through this merging of security and defence. Herz (2010, 609-610) highlights South American governments’ concern that this broadening of the concept could lead to greater control by the USA and other powers of various aspects of domestic politics in the region – a fear that interventionism could spread into new spheres, which would threaten the sovereignty of South American states.

This new security agenda and the role of the US are thus widely analysed by the IR literature on South America as enabling or even causing regionalisation. However, the tension around the conception of regionalisation as, on the one side, promoting security and prosperity but also, on the other side, favouring the involvement of the US in the region because of its connexion with the wider concept of security, actually hinders regionalisation. This tension is not studied by the IR literature to the extent

that this would require an examination of the representations of the different actors (regional and ‘external’), which can converge or produce tension, thereby constituting the regionalisation process. This tension is one of the main topics of the following chapters.

The same argument can be made about the role of the EU, which is not simply a model or a ‘marketplace of ideas’ for South American states as Malamud (2010, 181) argues, while Unasur is not just modelled after the EU as claimed by Mosinger (2012, 163). The positive discourse on regional integration and security (re)produced by the EU has, indeed, been assimilated to some extent by South American states; illustrated by their constant reference to the ‘EU model’ and the proliferation of regional organisations in the region. However, the consequence of this discourse on sovereignty (with the promotion of a supranational entity) is also understood as threatening for their national sovereignty and autonomy. In this case, as in the case of West Africa, a better understanding of the regionalisation process requires an analysis of the interplay between the discourses and practices of regional and ‘external’ actors.

2. Regional Powers

The IR literature on West Africa and South America gives special attention to the regional powers, Nigeria and Brazil, and their role in the regionalisation process. However, their account of the policy and behaviour of these two states usually limits itself to stressing their national interests, which can hinder or promote the regional projects.

The literature on West Africa emphasises the central role of Nigeria in the region. On the one hand, Buzan and Waeber (2003, 239-241) present West Africa as a proto-RSC centred on Nigeria, which is the key actor defining the regional order. Bah (2005, 79), Bolaji (2011, 186) and Thonke and Spliide (2012, 55) consider Nigeria as

the factor explaining the success of ECOWAS in the area of peace and security despite unfavourable conditions. Similarly, Arthur (2010, 17) insists on the indispensable role of Nigeria in the regional initiatives both politically and financially. There is a mainstream understanding of Nigeria as the regional hegemon whose willingness conditions the regionalisation process (Iwilade and Agbo 2012, 364; Francis 2009, 104).

On the other hand, other authors argue that ECOWAS is and will be limited by Nigeria's policy. Jackson (2012, 121) questions ECOWAS' capacity to act in the collective best interest of its members because of the existence of a hegemonic state, Nigeria. Tavares (2010, 166) adds that Nigeria is pursuing its national interest through a regional hegemonic strategy that aims to extract national dividends. Accordingly, the other member states should be careful in delegating responsibilities to ECOWAS in the domain of conflict management. These authors, who consider that Nigeria is hindering regionalisation because of its power and national interests, refer to the country as the hegemon in the region. Chapter one showed how the literature on hegemony and regional power has a tendency to establish deterministic links between material and ideational factors (at the foundation of the 'power' of regional powers), and their behaviour without actually analysing how the representations of the regional power constitute its policy towards the region. Moreover, the insistence on national interests takes us back to the already mentioned dichotomy established between national interests (selfish) and regional interests (altruistic). It clearly appears when Tavares (2010, 146) asks whether ECOWAS' rationale is a 'logic of cooperation and information sharing' or a cover for member states to advance their national security interests. Again, there is no such thing as a pre-given selfish national interest and an altruistic regional interest; this dichotomy does not exist unless it is

constructed as such by the actors. It does not provide any insights into the behaviour of Nigeria towards the region as shown by the contradictory claims of the IR literature. Instead, the construction of the identity and interests of Nigeria should be investigated to analyse the extent of their coherence with the region. We will see in chapter six that the articulation of national and regional security as inseparable in the Nigerian discourse is one of the key elements that enables the emergence of a regional political community in West Africa.

It should be noted that some authors such as Francis (2009, 104) examine Nigeria's foreign and security policy more carefully. He argues that Nigeria's strategic culture predisposed it towards interventionism in regional affairs to the extent that its politico-financial and military leadership linked its national security to regional security. Nevertheless, while shedding light on Nigeria's security culture, this type of analysis completely leaves aside the regional dimension: how Nigeria's representation of the region frames its regional policy and the regionalisation process beyond mere interventionism.

The literature on Brazil in South America presents similar problems. Brazil is acknowledged as the core state in the region, which shapes the regional projects and is taking over the leadership of the region. According to Trinkunas (2013, 85) Unasur is part of a Brazilian strategy to consolidate its regional leadership. Flesher and Radseck (2012) consider Brazil to be the key actor for regional security, arguing that Brazil is willing to do what is necessary to provide regional security in contrast to other South American states which have a tendency to free ride. While this argument is empirically dubious, as we will see in the following chapters, many scholars make the opposite claim that Brazil is reluctant to commit to a regionalisation process, particularly its security dimension. For Hurrell (1998, 254-255) Brazil shows

resistance towards more activist components of cooperative security, especially when compared to other South American countries such as Argentina, and refuses to be constrained by regional institutions. Pion Berlin (2005, 214) and Oelsner (2009, 209) further argue that Brazil refuses any supranational agency imposing binding decisions on its national policies because the government does not want to have its leadership limited by smaller less powerful states. Buzan and Waever (2003, 324) refer to this as a classical pattern for a leading power that will normally prefer less structure.

These accounts of Brazil's role draw on the deterministic link established between regional powers and their policy in the IR literature: because of the power difference it is assumed regional powers would automatically refuse to be constrained by regional institutions. Firstly, the case of Nigeria is enough to question the causal nature of this link. Secondly, this does not provide any insights into Brazil's policy towards the region: how can some scholars consider it to be the most active state furthering regional projects and security, whereas others focus on its reluctance? Indeed, contrarily to the Nigerian case, many authors present Brazil's national interest as being in the interest of the region and vice-versa. Regional integration would provide Brazil with stability, support for its global ambitions, and with a shield against the US, among other things (Buzan and Waever 2003, 332-333; Flesmes and Radseck 2012, 161-162; Hurrell 1998, 237, 253). So how can the Brazilian reluctance be understood? Both Brazil's representations of the nation, region and security, as well as its encounter with the discourses and practices of 'external' actors such as the US and the EU should be taken into account.

Conclusion

To conclude, the IR literature on regional projects in West Africa and South America with its focus on the causal effects of objective/material and ideational factors suffers from several shortcomings. In addition to being rather deterministic their conclusions are often contradictory, both for the same case and when comparing the two regions. This literature neglects to analyse how these factors are given meaning and processed by the discourses and practices of regional and ‘external’ actors which (re)produce the meaning and the form of the region; and how the encounter between regional and ‘external’ actors can frame the process of regionalisation. Finally, by presenting these causal links as natural and necessary, which is the case with the connection made between transnational security issues and regionalisation, the academic literature also participates in the constitution of the regionalisation process through a normative securitising discourse. This dimension of the academic literature is neither studied nor acknowledged by scholars.

A response to these shortcomings has been proposed in the second chapter which elaborates a theoretical framework for this doctoral thesis based on an analysis of the discourses and practices of the actors of the regionalisation process. The objective is, among other things, to avoid the deterministic tendencies of the IR literature by studying the interplay between the discursive structures framing the process, and the practices of the actors who adapt to new events and conditions in the region – thereby grasping the contingency and possible transformations in the process. The three following chapters use this framework to comparatively study the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America.

Chapter 5. The regional official discourses in West Africa and South America

Introduction

This chapter looks at the official discourses of the West African and South American regional organisations: ECOWAS, Mercosur and Unasur. A thorough analysis of these discourses is crucial to understand the process of regionalisation. Indeed, on the one hand, they frame the horizon of possibilities of the process in both regions. While not all the elements promoted in the discourses are actually translated into practices and actions – in particular in the case of ECOWAS⁷⁰ – they delineate the range of possible practices for regional actors who (re)produce these discourses to justify and legitimise their political project for the region.

On the other hand, the analysis of the regional official discourses shows the tensions within the ‘basic discourses’ and the struggle and competition between them in each region. Regional and ‘external’ actors draw on these tensions and struggles in order to promote or transform the dominant discourse and practices. Some contingency is thus introduced in the process of regionalisation through these tensions; ultimately, the process is thus not determined but located at the intersection of the discourses and practices of the different actors. The two following chapters of this dissertation focus precisely on that. However, this analysis of the regional official discourse makes it possible to clarify the dominant representations before tracing how the discourses of the different actors constitute them.

The first section of this chapter analyses the official discourse of ECOWAS and identifies the two main ‘basic discourses’: a ‘defensive integration’ discourse and a

⁷⁰ The implementation record of ECOWAS texts by member states is relatively poor.

‘securitisation of community’ discourse. The second section looks at the official discourse of Unasur and Mercosur in order to make explicit the two structuring discourses of South American regionalisation: the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse, and the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse.

I. ECOWAS: towards a regional political community

The official discourse in West Africa on regional integration in the field of foreign, security and defence policies is produced by ECOWAS the only organisation that includes all West African states with the exception of Mauritania. The official discourse is analysed here through a study of ECOWAS’s principal official documents, declarations, communiqués and speeches of high-level officials. This study is complemented by an analysis of the interviews conducted with ECOWAS officials. Two main ‘basic discourses’ structure the ECOWAS official discourse; they appear at different moments in time but overlap to some extent and propose different types of practices. The first one, named a ‘defensive integration’ discourse, was dominant from the creation of ECOWAS in 1975 until the early 1990s; the second, labelled here a ‘securitisation of community’ discourse, appeared in the early 1990s and became hegemonic in the late 1990s.

1. The ‘defensive integration’ discourse

The ‘defensive integration’ basic discourse is characterised by its defensive stance and its outward looking dimension. Before the 1990s, the texts relating to political issues, security and defence had as their main objective to defend and promote the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of West African states against foreign powers’ interference or intervention. The Protocol on Non-Aggression (ECOWAS 1978) states that: ‘Each Member State shall undertake to prevent

Foreigners resident on its territory from committing the acts (...) against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other Member States.’ The Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance of Defence (ECOWAS 1981) confirms this aim but expands it to internal conflicts in a member state which is ‘actively maintained and sustained from outside (...).’ These situations could trigger – with the exception of purely internal conflicts – the use of the (never created) Allied Forces of the Community. Some years later the first ECOWAS text concerning political principles emphasises again this defensive stance, mentioning that ECOWAS member states ‘should resist all forms of foreign interference aimed at undermining their solidarity and integration efforts’; they should ‘resist any attempt by forces outside [their] our sub-region to undermine the expression of our collective will and determination’ (ECOWAS 1991). What is distinctive in these texts is their articulation of an ‘us’ against ‘them’ discourse where foreign powers try to divide and manipulate West African states against each other and thereby threaten their sovereignty. As an answer West African states should unite against ‘them’ with the underlying representation that their security is interdependent and can only be assured via a collective effort. This shows a tension in this representation: on the one hand, its claimed core objective is to protect the sovereignty and autonomy of ECOWAS member states against external interference. On the other hand, it opens the possibility to intervene in a member states domestic affairs in case of the presence of a foreign power fuelling a conflict against another member state; a clear infringement of the sovereignty principle.

Moreover, this ‘defensive integration’ is represented as a necessity for the economic and social development of West Africa: ‘economic progress cannot be achieved unless the conditions for the necessary security are ensured in all Member States of the Community’ (ECOWAS 1981); the aim for member states is ‘advancing

[their] our economic cooperation and integration in a political environment of peace, security and stability (ECOWAS 1991). Hence, a strong articulation is established between security and economic development where the meaning of security is assimilated to the protection of the West African regimes in place against foreign interventions. ECOWAS is conceived here as a platform of protection or a shield against external interference. This should be understood within the post-colonial context and the recent independence of West African states characterised by the continuous involvement and interference of former colonial powers protecting their political and economic interests.⁷¹

ECOWAS's role as an outward looking platform is also performed through its association as a first step towards wider continental integration and not as an end in itself. The ECOWAS (1975) Treaty warns that 'efforts at sub-regional co-operation should not conflict with or hamper similar efforts being made to foster wider co-operation in Africa'; the revised ECOWAS (1993) Treaty made again the claim that sub-regional integration should 'contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.' ECOWAS purpose is therefore to facilitate African political and economic integration.

This 'defensive integration' discourse thus articulates different elements: a defence of the sovereignty, political autonomy and territorial integrity of its member states against external powers, which is also needed for their economic development. Economic development at this point implied the survival together, with the increased wealth, of the authoritarian and/or military regimes in place.⁷² In order to achieve this objective, the discourse puts forward the idea that West African states should be

⁷¹ France in particular maintained close relations with its former colonies in West Africa through development aid, economic and defence agreements. It also frustrated Nigeria with its involvement in its Civil War as will be explained in more details in the next chapter (Adebajo 2000, 186).

⁷² Until the 1990s, West Africa comprised mostly military regimes.

united as they are mutually vulnerable to each other's events and turmoil – in particular caused by foreign manipulation.

Hence, ECOWAS is understood as an appropriate platform protecting West African states towards these aims – including their insertion in the global economy⁷³ – and as a building block to the final objective of continental integration. Some tensions, however, challenge this discourse. As was mentioned, there is a tension between regional interference in domestic affairs and sovereignty. Indeed, the representation of a mutual vulnerability would require some interference in internal affairs, which is not consistent with the aim to strengthen sovereignty and the regimes in place. Secondly, the representation of ECOWAS as a protective platform against interference preserving their autonomy and sovereignty, and aiming at continental integration⁷⁴ conflicts with a representation of West Africa as 'our sub-region', and 'speaking with one voice under the aegis of ECOWAS on all international issues which touch and concern the vital interests of our development and prosperity' (ECOWAS 1991); this much more inward looking and community building stance clashes with the sovereignty and political autonomy principles.⁷⁵ This discourse remained dominant until the end of the 1990s. It then began to overlap with the 'securitisation of community' discourse, partly in continuity through the adaptation of some of its elements to adapt to a new context; and partly in tension and opposition.

⁷³ According to the 'defensive integration' discourse, economic integration with the creation of a common market, aims at enabling West African member states to strengthen their position in a rather hostile global economy. They could, for instance, negotiate in a stronger position with other economic blocs like the EU.

⁷⁴ A continental integration that is not considered as particularly threatening to the sovereignty of its member states due to its long-term perspective, and its enormous size restricting the depth of integration.

⁷⁵ There is an inherent tension in integration projects between their defensive objective as a platform of protection against external interference or towards their insertion in the global economy, supposedly promoting the sovereignty and autonomy of the states, and the consequence of these projects which is releasing and pooling sovereignty to achieve this objective.

2. The ‘securitisation of community’ discourse

The ‘securitisation of community’ discourse started emerging throughout the 1990s and became dominant between the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. This discourse differentiates itself from the first discourse by its inward looking dimension and a decrease in its defensiveness towards the exterior with, on the contrary, a constant call for the international community support and help. It articulates two main elements: a securitisation element and a community element. The securitisation element is constituted by a narrative linking security, development and democracy – democracy includes here a range of political norms such a good governance, the rule of law, the respect of human rights – with integration. At the core of this narrative is the nexus between security and development. This shift is marked by the adoption of the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security (ECOWAS 1999) establishing the ECOWAS peace and security architecture. It emphasises that ‘cross-border crimes, the proliferation of small arms and all illicit trafficking contribute to the development of insecurity and instability and jeopardise the economic and social development of the sub-region,’ and adds that ‘economic and social development and the security of people and States are inextricably linked.’ This statement is then repeated in, and underlies, most of ECOWAS’s texts, communiqués and declarations. It is in general associated with a concern for democratic stability as stated in the ECOWAS (2008) Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF): ‘political instability and low intensity conflicts remain major constraints on development in the region.’⁷⁶ In opposition to the ‘defensive integration’ discourse, the concept of security is not understood anymore as regime survival and defence against foreign interference. It

⁷⁶ This narrative is also formulated by all the ECOWAS officials interviewed (Dr Ibn Chambas 2011; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a; etc.).

concerns instead internal security issues such as illegal trafficking, terrorism, proliferation of small arms, and internal conflicts; articulating a comprehensive view of security aimed at people's security through the connection between security, democracy and development.

Moreover, security issues are represented as being regional or transnational and interconnected by nature (ECOWAS 1999). The ECPF, the core ECOWAS text relating to security with the 1999 Mechanism⁷⁷ clearly outlines this representation:

‘violent internal conflict erupted in Liberia (1989) and Sierra Leone (1991) as a new phenomenon not confined to the borders of individual nation states, but with serious regional implications, (...). (...) these devastating conflicts soon took a regionalized character, fuelled by the proliferation of SALW, as well as private armies of warlords, mercenaries. (...). The ripples of these so-called internal conflicts were instantly felt far beyond national borders in the form of refugee flows, severe deterioration of livelihood, health and nutrition standards, disrupted infrastructure, and the proliferation of weapons, violence, and trans-national crime.’

From this diagnosis of security issues as regional problems the logical following response is thus regional:⁷⁸ ECOWAS is designated as the only institution able to deal efficiently with these threats and consolidate regional stability by providing a necessary comprehensive approach. Regional integration is here securitised as necessary for the survival of the region, its security and therefore its development – with democracy also being a condition and result of both. The different ECOWAS plans and strategies concerning security issues therefore continuously stress the need for effective cooperation and comprehensive regional policies and programmes

⁷⁷ These two documents are both nodal texts widely referred to by later texts and actors.

⁷⁸ The Heads of State and Government took the habit to review the peace and security situation of the region during ECOWAS summits. Their comments on the internal security issues of member states always emphasise their regional dimensions, presenting them as problems for regional peace and security (ECOWAS Authority 2002; ECOWAS Authority 2011a; ECOWAS Authority 2013).

(ECOWAS 2001).⁷⁹ The ECPF points to ECOWAS as the key actor in this environment and highlights that with ‘its wide political and economic mandate, has an obvious role in harnessing regional resources’ (ECOWAS 2008). In the same way, former President of the ECOWAS Commission Dr Ibn Chambas (2011) commented in an interview that ‘a regional approach to addressing peace and security is a vehicle which can help to compensate (...) the different countries who are somehow very weak and are by themselves not very capable’. Accordingly, throughout the 2000s up until now, an increased emphasis has been added on the necessity of a preventive and comprehensive approach that only ECOWAS can provide to deal with multidimensional and interconnected security issues. A recent illustration is this official statement on piracy claiming the need for the ECOWAS Commission to ‘urgently develop a holistic strategic maritime policy framework’ (ECOWAS Authority 2011b). This move towards a regional comprehensive approach to security is generally described as a response to ‘realities’ and ‘facts’ that West African states have to acknowledge and act upon (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013b).

The second element of this discourse is a community element representing the region as united through its past and its problems and therefore logically aiming towards the same future by responding together to the same challenges. This narrative, which produces the representation of shared past and common problems, provides the background of many ECOWAS documents (ECOWAS 2006). In a speech at Chatham House, former President of the ECOWAS Commission Gbeho (2011b) states that the evolution of ECOWAS can only be understood against the

⁷⁹ See also the Convention on SALW (ECOWAS 2006), and the Political Declaration on the Prevention of drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking and organized crimes in West Africa (ECOWAS 2008).

backdrop of the ‘history of West Africa since establishing contact with the world beyond its borders’, with ‘slavery, colonialism, as well as racial and economic marginalization’ which ‘left an intrinsic yearning for freedom, unity and solidarity’ leading to ‘its wish to integrate its States and peoples.’ The ECPF also starts from history, pointing to ‘decades and centuries of interactions with regards to external, regional and internal power relations’, ‘fault-lines in the architecture of the post-colonial African State.’ It indicates that:

‘the root cause of violent conflict, such as poverty, exclusion, gender and political/economic inequalities are traceable to these global and local fault lines. They have always constituted a time bomb under governance processes in West Africa, being the primary source of latent, indirect violence’ (ECOWAS 2008).

This representation of the history and problems shared by all West African states serves as the foundation for the depiction of West Africa as one sub-region populated by one people, instead of including different states cohabiting in ECOWAS. All the texts, communiqués and declarations refer to ‘our peoples’, ‘our subregion’, with the aim to ‘create a borderless region with a common citizenship of equal rights’ (ECPF 2008). ECOWAS officials constantly reiterate this stance, highlighting the artificial nature of the border with comments such as ‘we now understand ourselves’ or ‘we are all one’ (Dr Ibn Chambas 2011; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a). This is even to the point that the national Armed Forces and Security Services – the archetypal symbol of state sovereignty – are supposed to be shared as they have the duty to ‘maintain peace and security in the ECOWAS sub-region’ and should therefore be controlled by the ECOWAS institutions as states in the Draft Code of Conduct for the Armed Forces and Security Services in West Africa (ECOWAS 2006).

This representation of a community is articulated to, and justifies, the straightforward acceptance and promotion of supranationality through the pooling of sovereignty.⁸⁰ ECOWAS is thus given the right and obligation to monitor the peace and security situation in the region and intervene in its member states through electoral observation missions, mediation, sanctions, and even military intervention. Already, the Revised Treaty of ECOWAS (1993) stated that ‘the integration of the Member States into a viable regional community may demand the partial and gradual pooling of national sovereignties to the Community.’ The Mechanism (ECOWAS 1999) made it operational by giving to the Mediation and Security Council⁸¹ the power to take decisions ‘on all matters relating to peace and security’ and ‘authorize all forms of intervention’ including in the case of an internal conflict threatening the peace and security of the region, or democracy in a member state. The Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (ECOWAS 2001) makes it mandatory that ECOWAS ‘dispatch a fact-finding mission’ for each election in a member state which should remain in the country throughout the election period. Even more, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat (then Commission)⁸² is given the responsibility to monitor, supervise, support or apply all the regional programs; while the member states should update or harmonise their national legislation to the regional standard (ECOWAS 2006; ECOWAS 2008). ECOWAS is thus given responsibility, legitimacy and a clear agency to deal with the security and development issues of

⁸⁰ According to ECOWAS officials, ECOWAS is already a supranational institution and should continue on this path (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013b)

⁸¹ The Mediation and Security Council is one of the decision-making bodies of ECOWAS peace and security architecture. It has the mandate to take decisions for the implementation of the Mechanism and regarding all issues of peace and security on behalf of the Authority which is ECOWAS highest decision-making body including all Heads of State and Government.

⁸² The Executive Secretariat is the permanent executive body of ECOWAS. It was transformed into the ECOWAS Commission in 2007. It includes the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department which has the task to implement the Mechanism as well as all other texts relevant to peace and security.

West Africa.⁸³ This evolution is presented as the only possible future in order to efficiently enable peace and economic development.

Hence, ECOWAS' meaning shifted from a platform of protection against external intervention or towards continental integration to an end in itself, a community with agency to act for West Africa. Continental integration is still in the horizon but not as an overarching aim to which ECOWAS' development is subjected; at the same time the unity of West African states does not aim at protecting them from external interference but contributes to the development and assertion of a prosperous community. Dr Ibn Chambas (2002) therefore writes about an 'integrated and united West Africa, competitive, prosperous and dynamical which will bring a significant contribution to the world economy' with 'the final objective which is the constitution of a united economic and political whole in West Africa. The voice of ECOWAS should be stronger, more coherent, (...).' Accordingly, ECOWAS is now presented as a model for African integration. For Gbeho (2011a) 'ECOWAS has matured into a sustainable and vibrant model in regional integration worldwide and a model on the continent of Africa.' A stance that is also conveyed by ECOWAS officials through comments such as: 'West Africa is the only region in Africa where you can move within the region without a visa' (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a).

These two elements of the 'securitisation of community' discourse are tightly connected as they enable one another: the representation of security as regional, and the following securitisation of integration makes the pooling of sovereignty possible by depicting it as necessary for the mere survival of West African states; while the representation of one people in one region forming a community also makes

⁸³ Indeed, during their summits, the Heads of State and Government review the peace and security situation of the region, they 'encourage', 'express concern', 'condemn', 'support', 'urge', do 'not tolerate' and even 'demand' and 'decide' for individual member states which shows the extent of the interference of ECOWAS in the domestic affairs of its member states and the degree of acceptance of this involvement (ECOWAS Authority 2010; ECOWAS Authority 2011a; ECOWAS Authority 2010).

acceptable, and even normal, the setting up of supranational institutions and the attribution of an autonomous agency to ECOWAS.

3. Continuities, overlapping and tension: the construction of a hegemonic discourse

The 'securitisation of community' discourse appears to be partly in continuity with the 'defensive integration' discourse. On the one side, the connection between economic development and security is still maintained with, however, a transformation of the concept of security from regime security to the security of people. This can be understood in the context of the democratisation of the sub-region; by the end of the 1990s most of West Africa's states were at least formal democracies celebrating elections, which contributed to shifting the focus of security. In particular, the re-democratisation of Nigeria in 1999 is a turning point that will be further explored in the next chapter. On the other side, the representation of a mutual vulnerability of West African states that requires a united front against foreign intervention continues through the idea of an interdependent indivisible regional security, although now increasingly targeting internal security issues. The shift here is also partly an adaptation to the rise of internal conflicts in the 1990s with the civil wars in Liberia (1989-1996 and 1999-2003), Sierra Leone (1991-2002), and Guinea-Bissau (1998-99), but which has continued during the 21st Century until now with political instability and regular coups d'état in Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, etc., and the current conflict in Northern Mali since 2012. Alongside this there has also been a notable increase in illegal trafficking (UNODC 2013). All this contributed to a new focus in the security policy of West African states. The stance of defensive unity against external interference in the domestic affairs of member states and the region in general was also realised in a context of declining involvement by

former colonial powers in the region. In turn, this was replaced by a constant call to the international community (the UN, the EU, international donors, etc.) to contribute more to build ECOWAS capacities in order to enable it to deal with its own problems and promote the economic and social development of the region.⁸⁴ As we will see in the next chapter, ‘external’ actors such as the EU had a key part in this shift and contributed to (re)producing the ‘securitisation of community’ discourse. Finally, the latter discourse also builds on the tension present in the ‘defensive integration’ discourse between sovereignty and interference, and between community and mere platform. It shifts the defensive discourse towards the representation of a community-building project with a right to interference in domestic affairs according to consensually agreed regional norms.

This shift from the first discourse to the second is not however completely fluid; the defensive discourse reappears occasionally, which produces some tensions. The 1999 Mechanism, while giving to ECOWAS the right of interference also aims at the ‘equality of sovereign States’, ‘territorial integrity and political independence’. The Program for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development in Africa (PCASED) (ECOWAS 1999), while promoting regional cooperation, also stresses the need for ‘controlling frontiers’ – which is contradicted in later documents with the principle that the control of borders should not prejudice the free movement of people (ECOWAS 2001). The call for African integration as the ultimate aim also still re-surfaces in the discourse of ECOWAS officials (Dr Ibn Chambas 2011, Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a). Recently, concerning the very sensitive case of terrorism, the emphasis was put on ‘close collaboration at all levels of inter-

⁸⁴ However, a tension remains between, on the one hand, the constant reminder of the negative role of foreign powers in West African history as being at the origin of many of its contemporary problems – also contributing to promote a sense of community in the region –; and, on the other hand, the wide opening of the region and its integration process to international support.

governmental action and cooperation on practical matters of the prevention and combating of terrorism' (ECOWAS 2013b). The omission of any particular role for ECOWAS and the stress on 'inter-governmental' action, as well as a reminder in the ECPF (2008) that 'ECOWAS Member States bear primary responsibility for peace and security'⁸⁵ signals a reappearance of some elements of the 'defensive integration' discourse which is still in the background.

Nevertheless the 'securitisation of community' discourse is consolidating and becoming largely hegemonic to the extent that it informs most of the texts, communiqués, declarations and the speeches of ECOWAS officials and member states' officials when representing ECOWAS. This shift and overlapping between the two discourses appears obvious in the ECPF (ECOWAS 2008):

'(...) as steps are taken under the new ECOWAS Strategic Vision to transform the region from an "ECOWAS of States" into an "ECOWAS of the Peoples", the tension between sovereignty and supranationality, and between regime security and human security, shall be progressively resolved in favour of supranationality and human security respectively.'

II. South America: a harmonious coexistence of sovereign states

The official discourse on regional integration in the fields of foreign, security and defence policies in South America is mainly produced by two regional organisations: Mercosur and Unasur. Mercosur originally included Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay at the signature of the Asuncion Treaty in 1991. It now also includes Venezuela as a full member since 2012, as well as the rest of South America's states⁸⁶ as associate members: Bolivia,⁸⁷ Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname. Unasur includes all Mercosur member and associate member states. The two regional

⁸⁵ In most of ECOWAS' documents concerning political and peace and security issues there is no such reminder: they present ECOWAS as having the primary role and responsibility for peace and security.

⁸⁶ Except from French Guyana.

⁸⁷ Bolivia signed a membership agreement in 2012 and is now waiting for the legislatures of Mercosur member states to ratify it.

organisations clearly overlap and one of the stated objectives of Unasur is, indeed, to integrate Mercosur and the Andean Community of Nations (ANC)⁸⁸ that includes Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. The analysis of this discourse is based on the official documents of the organisations including the treaties, protocols, communiqués, declarations, etc. It cannot however be based on interviews or speeches from Mercosur or Unasur officials as these organisations do not have a permanent staff. Hence, this analysis of the South American official discourse takes both Mercosur and Unasur into account – as the same ‘basic discourses’ can be found in both organisations – while showing how the interplay between these discourses is different in the two organisations. Two main ‘basic discourses’ can be distinguished. The first one can be termed the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse; the second one can be called a ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse. Both discourses compete in the two organisations: the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse is clearly hegemonic in the context of Unasur,⁸⁹ while it is dominant but continuously challenged by the second discourse in Mercosur.

1. The ‘unity in diversity’ discourse

The ‘unity in diversity’ discourse emerged with the creation of Mercosur in 1991 and was further strengthened with the creation of Unasur. It paradoxically articulates two diverging elements: the idea of the unity of the region through integration; and the idea that integration should at the same time be plural, progressive and flexible.

The first element promotes a narrative linking regional integration with development, democracy, peace and security. The link between these concepts is not

⁸⁸ However, it is not clear to which extent they should be integrated: whether they should keep their separate identities or whether they should ultimately merge in Unasur.

⁸⁹ All the documents produced by South American States as a group are taken into account for the analysis of Unasur’s discourse: from the first summit of South American Presidents in 2000 to the creation of the South American Community of Nation (CSN) in 2004 and its transformation into Unasur in 2008, up until today.

clearly articulated, it establishes a loose connection presenting integration as one of the tools to achieve the overall aim of the prosperity of the region. This narrative is present in both Mercosur and Unasur with the idea of South America as ‘a singular area of democracy, peace, supportive cooperation, integration and shared economic and social development’ (Presidents of South America 2000). This narrative bases itself on the constant reiteration of the evident unity and integration of a region whose states are presented as strongly united by a common past through the figures of their national heroes fighting for the same goals of independence and emancipation under the umbrella of the *Libertador* and father of integration, Simon Bolivar.⁹⁰ Integration is given the status of an ideal state that the peoples of South America have always sought and that already belong to them through their history. For example, Mercosur member and associate states refer to ‘the emancipatory aim of the *Libertador* who, next to a pleiad of heroes and heroines of Latin-American independence, placed the foundation for the construction of the region as a pole of autonomous power’ (Mercosur 2010).⁹¹

However, this unity element justifying cooperation is intrinsically linked to another element that, paradoxically, puts forward the diversity and pluralism of the region. It emphasises an ambitious but at the same time flexible and progressive project with no constraints, in order to take this diversity into account. South American unity and identity are only in the process of being constructed: even though they were historically already existent, they include different political entities and

⁹⁰ Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) was a military officer and political leader who played a central role in Latin America’s fight for independence from the Spanish Empire. He greatly contributed to lead Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia to independence. He also participated to the foundation of the first union of independent nation, *Gran Colombia*, of which he was President from 1819 to 1830. *Gran Colombia* included Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama, northern Peru, western Guyana and northwest Brazil.

⁹¹ For Unasur see also the Consensus of Guayaquil (Presidents of South America 2002) and the Declaration of Cusco (Presidents of South America 2004) which speaks of the *Gran Patria Americana* as a reference to Bolivar’s *Gran Colombia*.

peoples who need time to eventually achieve unity. It is a 'unity in diversity' where member states have different priorities and temporalities. The integration process is thus fragmented in multiple ways: politically, geographically and temporally. Mercosur documents mostly insist on the temporal fragmentation with an emphasis on the unity together with a 'progressive', 'gradual', and/or 'flexible' construction (Mercosur 1991; Mercosur 2004). Conversely, Unasur's discourse shows the multiple layers of fragmentation through a unity based on the harmonious cohabitation and cooperation of strictly sovereign states (Presidents of South America 2000). Unasur member states present their unity as 'a new model of integration for the 21st Century', with its 'own identity, pluralist, in the middle of diversities and differences, acknowledging the different political and ideological conceptions that correspond to the democratic plurality of our [their] countries' (South American Community of Nation 2006). A new model which is based on the principles of:

'Sovereignty, respect of territorial integrity (...), insuring the prerogative of the national States to decide their strategies of development and their insertion at the international level, without interference in their internal affairs (...). (...) the process of construction of this integration is ambitious and precise in its strategic objectives and at the same time flexible and gradual in its implementation' (South American Community of Nation 2006).⁹²

Hence, there is a constant tension in this 'unity in diversity' discourse between the goal of unity towards creating a South American community with its own identity, and the need to preserve pluralism, diversity, and the autonomy and sovereignty of each state. While the first element promotes integration, the second element of this discourse restricts it to mere cooperation. It presents itself as a community discourse but clearly states that the objective is not to construct an integrated political community; instead it preaches for the harmonious coexistence of sovereign states.

⁹² See also on this the Constitutive Treaty of Unasur (Unasur 2008).

This tension that largely restrict the possibility of practices of regionalisation underlies most of the documents relating to the different policy areas where integration is generally assimilated to a framework of cooperation: a tool serving specific objectives with no region-building purpose.

Among these objectives, the ‘international insertion’⁹³ of South America is considered one of the main goals for the states of the region. Regional coordination and consultation on (only) certain issues of interest are presented as enabling the member states to diversify their relations with the world; in particular with the developing world such as with Asian and African countries (Mercosur 1996; South America-Arab countries 2005; Mercosur 2007). It would provide them with a stronger position in trade negotiations with other regional blocs or states, and more generally in international forums.⁹⁴ Finally, it would give them more leverage to reform an unjust international system, and promote a fairer multilateralism with a reform of the UN institutions, particularly the UN Security Council – a call which is present in every Mercosur and Unasur document related to political issues (Common Market Council 2007; Unasur 2008). Integration with the aim of ‘international insertion’ thus has a strong defensive dimension with the overall aims to reform the international system where South American states are supposedly being marginalised, and gain autonomy in the trade and political fields. Integration here is outward looking, the objective is not to give one voice/identity to South America but to occasionally unite, on certain topics, against the developed world. Indeed, South American integration is presented, in this discourse, as a tool which complements

⁹³ The concept of ‘international insertion’ is key in the South American discourse: it refers to the capacity of the states to reach a political and economic standing in the global order and avoid their perceived marginalisation.

⁹⁴ This was one of the rationales for the creation of Mercosur in 1991: to create an economic bloc for a successful insertion in an increasingly globalised economy dominated by regional economic blocs such as the EU and NAFTA (the negotiations started in 1986).

other tools such as bilateral relations, Latin American integration or new forms of South-South cooperation⁹⁵ that also provide South American states with platforms for their international insertion (Presidents of South America 2000; Presidents of South America 2004). This shows well that the purpose of the unity of South American States is not the construction of a regional community but the increased autonomy and sovereignty of these states through the development and diversification of their international relations.

More precisely in the fields of security and defence, the ‘unity and diversity’ discourse provides a loose framework for cooperation. The overall perspective is pragmatist with no implication of necessity or urgency, stressing instead the progressive and/or limited character of the cooperation. Indeed, all documents emphasise the need for some cooperation at the regional level because of the growing transnational nature of security issues (drug, firearms and human trafficking, smuggling, and terrorism), but only as a complement to national policies, bilateral or multilateral agreements. They promote exchanges of information and experience, cooperation for training and, occasionally, simultaneous or coordinated actions at the borders (Mercosur 1999; Mercosur 2000). However, importantly, this cooperation should not hinder national legislations, public policies and the autonomy of the member states. The General Plan for Reciprocal Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security (Mercosur 1999), for instance, stresses that this plan only ‘orients’ and ‘regulates’, ‘in conformity with the internal legislation of each member state’ and ‘without prejudice of other operative frameworks that the Parties agreed to bilaterally or trilaterally.’

⁹⁵ South-South Cooperation is a term used to describe cooperation in the areas of development aid, exchange of knowledge, technology and expertise between developing countries. The aim is to become less dependent from the aid programs of developed countries and international organisations. Mercosur and Unasur are trying to develop this type of cooperation, for instance with African, Arab and Asian states or region.

The concept of security remains purposefully undefined with the reference to public security as well as to ‘citizen security’⁹⁶ (Presidents of South America 2000; Unasur 2006). One constant element is the definition of security as a national matter and therefore requiring public domestic and non-militarised policies. This blurriness around the concept of security is recognised by the Declaration on Citizen Security in South America (Unasur 2005) which acknowledges that:

‘from the conceptual point of view, the forms of treating the security of the citizens are in permanent process of evolution in all South American countries. (...) (...) it should be recalled that public security should be understood as exclusive state action.’

Hence, these documents decidedly avoid a focus on regional security: the national particularities or the global dimension of security issues are instead emphasised. The problem of drug trafficking is thus presented as the ‘global problem of drugs’ to be resolved under the principle of ‘shared responsibility’⁹⁷ because the criminal networks act ‘beyond South American national borders’ (Presidents of South America 2002). In the same way, terrorism is defined exclusively as a threat ‘to international peace and security’ (Mercosur Common Market Council 2004). An underlying tension exists between an acknowledgement that some threats are transnational and require some joint actions, and the preoccupation to maintain a domestic concept of security emphasising national priorities and particularities in order to protect the autonomy of the member states.

This preoccupation also leads to a clear separation of the concept of security (internal) from the concept of defence (external).⁹⁸ Cooperation in defence includes

⁹⁶ The Spanish term is ‘seguridad ciudadana’ which literally translates as ‘citizen security’. It could be translated as ‘public safety’ but, in this case, would lose the concept of ‘security’ which is central in the documents referring to ‘seguridad ciudadana’.

⁹⁷ The Unasur Council that deals with this issue is called the South American Council on the Global Problem of Drugs.

⁹⁸ This is also evident in the denomination of the sectorial councils of Unasur: the South American Defence Council, the South American Council on the Global Problem of Drugs, the South American

building trust through transparency and confidence building measures with some possible cooperation between national defence industries, or to undertake joint military exercises or training (Mercosur, Bolivia and Chile 1999; South American Defence Council 2013). This cooperation is explicitly placed within the frame of the ambitious objective to build a South American defence identity with a shared vision which should, paradoxically, take into account 'national characteristics' (South American Defence Council 2009). The tension between unity and diversity appears again, as well as the purpose of this identity, which is outward looking, either to protect the region from potential extra-regional aggressors,⁹⁹ or contribute to the political influence of the region.¹⁰⁰ The target of this defensive dimension is the developed world, in particular the US¹⁰¹ or, in some cases, European states¹⁰² accused to interfere in the internal affairs of South American states.¹⁰³ For example, the possibility of intervention is often evoked in the case of the protection of natural

Council on the Security of the Citizens, Justice and Coordinated Actions against Organised Transnational Delinquency. These names show a clear differentiation between security and defence in order to prevent the militarisation of security issues; as well as a reluctance to acknowledge the interconnection and regional dimension of these issues. Drug trafficking is therefore separated from organised crime and conceptualised as a global issue.

⁹⁹ For instance, Unasur member states condemn the Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) negotiated between the USA and Colombia in 2009: they reaffirmed 'that the presence of foreign military forces cannot, with its means and resources linked to its own objectives, threaten the sovereignty and the integrity of any South-American nation and thereby the peace and security of the region' (Unasur 2009).

¹⁰⁰ For example, through the joint participation of South American states in UN peace operations such as the MINUSTAH in Haiti.

¹⁰¹ The US occupies the constant figure of the enemy, the Other, against which South American states have to defend themselves. Whether clearly articulated or implied, this figure is highlighted in an important number of documents, for instance in the Delegates Council (Unasur 2010) Report which states the 'preoccupation of the countries of Unasur with the US foreign policy towards the region'.

¹⁰² The EU and/or its member states also often take on the role of the Other. The Malvinas Islands, for instance, are still the object of a dispute between the United Kingdom (UK) and Argentina, which led to a war in 1982. The Special Declaration on the Malvinas Island (Unasur 2012) highlights that 'the origins of the dispute and its colonial character cannot be ignored.'

¹⁰³ The history of extra-regional intervention in Latin America goes far back to the period of colonisation dominated by Spain and Portugal who created empires for themselves in the region from the late 15th Century. The independences of Latin-American countries in the 19th Century did not put an end to extra-regional interference as it led to an increased involvement of France, Great Britain and the USA; and this until the beginning of the 20th Century when the latter asserted its exclusive influence on the region. After the 2nd World War, Washington's policy toward Latin America included direct and indirect interventions to remove or keep out of power any left or pro-communist regime in the region.

resources, which requires the unity of the region in order to preserve its sovereignty over its own resources. The Declaration of Mendoza (Mercosur 2012) asserts the member states’

‘intention to promote consultations and exchange of information (...) concerning situations or activities developed by third countries or groups of countries that think about affecting or could affect their sovereign right on the respective natural resources and wealth within their territory, as well as its sustainable preservation and exploitation.’

The South American Defence Council (CDS) (2013)¹⁰⁴ is thus supposed to develop ‘mechanisms of cooperation in the field of protection and defence of natural resources and biodiversity.’¹⁰⁵

Hence, neither the integration of the armed forces nor the possibility of collective defence features in official documents. While the unity and defence identity of South America is stressed against extra-regional powers and to foster the region’s political influence, cooperation cannot infringe on the autonomy and sovereignty of the states. The purpose again is not to build a community but to support national policies.

Finally, this emphasis on autonomy also shows at the political level. Indeed, while democracy is considered the foundational consensual value of both Mercosur and Unasur, necessary for the peace and development of the region – and requiring regional action in case of a breach of the democratic principle¹⁰⁶ – it does not supplant the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs which remain the most fundamental principles in South America. The different protocols underline that all initiatives to prevent and deal with breaches of democracy should be

¹⁰⁴ The CDS is one of the sectorial councils of Unasur. Its role is to be a forum for consultation, cooperation and coordination in the field of defence.

¹⁰⁵ While the cooperation to protect natural resources targets potential external aggressor(s), these ones are never clearly defined. However, it generally implies a coalition of Western powers (USA, Canada, European states), Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations.

¹⁰⁶ The key texts are the Protocol of Ushuaia (Mercosur 1998a), the Protocol of Ushuaia II (Mercosur 2011), and the Additional Protocol to the Constitutive Treaty of Unasur on the commitment to Democracy (Unasur 2010).

consistent with the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the concerned state. Official documents do not give Mercosur or Unasur any agency to intervene – in contrast to ECOWAS as we saw in the first section of this chapter. The analysis of the discourse shows instead that the heads of state and government rather act and take responsibility through consensus, deciding the extent of cooperation and intervention needed in each case. It is telling that sovereignty and territorial integrity are the concept firstly emphasised when referring to the only ‘binding’ political norm of the region, democracy.

Hence, the ‘unity and diversity’ discourse is characterised by a tension between its two elements that restricts regionalisation and puts the emphasis on the cohabitation and cooperation of autonomous and sovereign states. Integration is presented in this discourse as a tool to further national priorities and not as a purposefully region-building practice. We will see in chapter six how Brazil, in particular, frames this regional discourse with its foreign policy concepts such as ‘autonomy’ and ‘universalism’.

2. The ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse

The ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse is characterised by its emphasis on the necessity of the integration project through a much stronger narrative maintained between democracy, security, stability and development as intrinsically linked and inseparable. In this narrative, integration is not a tool aiming to promote national policies but an end in itself (Mercosur 1998a); at the same time, integration needs to be preserved inasmuch it is the guarantor of the other elements, namely peace, stability, prosperity, development, etc. (Mercosur 1998b). This narrative thus presents a virtuous circle where all the elements are necessary to each other: for instance, ‘peace (...) represents the primordial condition of the existence and continuity of

Mercosur,’ – therefore, an efficient system of security at the regional level would ‘constitute an essential element for the development of our peoples’ (Mercosur, Bolivia and Chile 1999).¹⁰⁷

Regional integration is thus securitised as necessary for the future of the region, its prosperity, democratic stability and peace. This narrative that originated with the creation of Mercosur is constantly in tension within Mercosur – and more occasionally within Unasur – with the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse representing regional integration as a progressive and flexible tool providing for a loose framework of cooperation. The transition to democracy of Mercosur member states in the 1980s/1990s, as well as the perceived need to anchor this democratic process together with neo-liberal economic reforms¹⁰⁸ through the integration project, contributes to explain this discourse. It was also a way to ensure the end of the tensions and rivalry between Brazil and Argentina that could have endangered the democratic process through the empowering of the armed forces. Democracy is therefore one of the core elements of this securitisation discourse, which should be rooted and defended through regional integration. It is relevant to note here that the democratic norm of Mercosur and Unasur is a point of encounter of the two basic discourses with one promoting democracy within the frame of strict respect of the sovereignty principle as we saw in the last part; while the other one puts first respect of democracy. The two discourses then lead to very different practices in terms of regional interventions that frame the regionalisation process in different ways, as will be shown in section two of chapter seven.

¹⁰⁷ See also the Joint Communiqué of the Presidents of the Member States of Mercosur (Mercosur Common Market Council 2008).

¹⁰⁸ In the context of a severe debt crisis in Latin America that started in the 80s also known as the ‘lost decade’.

This narrative builds as well on the representation of the region as a community with its own problems and needs, implying an interdependence and mutual vulnerability concerning regional security. The General plan for Reciprocal Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security (Mercosur 1999), for instance, asserts that because ‘the actual situation makes the security of the sub-regional community vulnerable’, Mercosur states should act together in an efficient manner to ‘reach the sustainable development of the region.’ Security threats are conceived as transnational and endangering regional security and stability, which entails the requirement of regional actions to deal efficiently with these threats. This articulation made in the discourse always calls to the ‘reality’ of the situation on the ground: the ‘nature and characteristics of these threats demand joint action by the states’ (Mercosur 2010). In the same way, another document relating to security issues (Mercosur 2004) acknowledges that

‘the significant increase of organised transnational crime, imply new challenges that require joint and coordinated actions in all the region with the common objective to reduce as much as possible the crimes, as well as their negative impact on the population and on the consolidation of democracies in the Mercosur.’

Some texts even invoke the necessity to develop a common security policy (Mercosur 2006). While both the ‘unity in diversity’ and the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse refer to the need to tackle transnational threats; they open the way for different policies and practices to deal with them, on the basis of different understandings of security. Indeed, on the one hand the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse, which conceives security as primarily internal, does not prioritise regional security and therefore limits regional cooperation; on the other hand, the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse, which sees security on an internal/external continuum, focuses firstly on regional security as the appropriate level of action.

The securitisation of regional integration is taken one step further in the documents produced by the Parliament of the Mercosur (Parlasur),¹⁰⁹ which emphasises the urgency to take regional actions:

‘Considering that drug trafficking, smuggling, firearms trafficking and organised crime generally excessively affect the Member States of Mercosur, constituting a serious threat for the security of the bloc and to the process of integration (...) reduces economic growth (...). (...) it is vital to implement a mechanism more able and efficient to deal with organised crime within Mercosur.’

In another document Parlasur underlines the interconnections between drug traffickers and smugglers from Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, with terrorist groups such as the FARC¹¹⁰ or the Paraguayan People's Army (EPP).¹¹¹ It stresses the need to take drastic measures within Mercosur against the development of these networks that could push ‘South America in a wave of violence without precedent in the continent’ (Parliament of the Mercosur 2010).

Parlasur also recommends the setting up of collective defence.¹¹² It urges ‘the Member States of Mercosur, to act in defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any member state, in the face of threats or aggressive intention of any nation’ (Parliament of the Mercosur 2009a). It invokes the ‘coordination of a

¹⁰⁹ The Parliament of Mercosur, also called Parlasur was created in 2005 and started functioning in 2007. Its role is more political as it does not have a decision-making power. Most of its members, except in the case of Paraguay, are still not directly elected. Its official documents cannot therefore be enforced and do not have the legal value that other Mercosur official documents have. However, they contribute to the (re)production of the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse.

¹¹⁰ The FARC-EP or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army is a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group operating in Colombia next to its border with Venezuela since 1964. Its use of drug trafficking, kidnappings, and political assassinations as means of action led to its classification as terrorist group by some countries such as the US and Colombia.

¹¹¹ The EPP is a nationalist Marxist-Leninist guerrilla movement operating in the North-eastern part of Paraguay.

¹¹² It is noticeable that neither Latin American nor South American states have a collective defence agreement. The only collective defence agreement existing is at the hemispheric level: the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) or Rio Treaty, which was signed in 1947. During the Malvinas War in 1982 between the UK and Argentina, the USA, as well as Chile and Colombia, sided with the UK arguing that Argentina was the aggressor. Many Latin-American countries considered this as a final sign of the failure of the Treaty. Mexico officially withdrew in 2002, followed by Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela since 2012.

common defence policy of the Mercosur’ and opens the possibility for ‘the creation of a joint force of defence to move forward in the process of integration’ (Parliament of the Mercosur 2009b). This element of the ‘securitisation discourse’ overlaps with the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse to the extent they both share a strong defensive dimension. Indeed, on several occasions Parlasur documents refer to the threat of the US, mentioning ‘the history of external intervention in the conflicts of the region’, and its preoccupation with ‘the reactivation of the 4th Fleet’¹¹³ which could ‘compromise the process of integration in South America and even in Mercosur’ (Parliament of the Mercosur 2009c).

However, the answer given by the ‘securitisation’ discourse to this range of security and defence issues is the merging of security/defence in one field (to the extent that security is not primarily internal anymore) and the elaboration of common security and defence policies – drawing on the idea of the security interdependence of South American states. It greatly contrasts with the division maintained by the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse between (internal) security, on one side, and defence cooperation as a regional platform functioning as a shield of protection, on the other side.

Importantly, some Mercosur and Parlasur documents perform a merging of security and defence towards a comprehensive concept of security including both aspects. Illustratively, Parlasur adhered to the Euro-Latin American Charter for Peace and Security drafted by the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly which

¹¹³ The Fourth Fleet is a United States Navy Command which is part of the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) patrolling the Caribbean, as well as Central and South America. It was initially established during the 2nd World War to protect the US territory against its enemies. It was reactivated in 2008 with new missions such as supporting the fight against drug trafficking, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. This reactivation at a moment of political change in South America with the coming into power of left wing parties in most of the region, and the discovery of oil on Brazil’s Atlantic coast, led to suspicions of potential American interference, and to defensive declarations from South American governments.

states that nowadays peace and security depend on many factors such as ‘inequality in the redistribution of wealth, generalised hunger for the poorest, violation of human rights, good governance, exclusion of minorities from the decision-making process, (...), massive migrations, (...), terrorism, corruption and organised crime’ (Parliament of the Mercosur 2009e). In a recommendation Parlasur adds that it would be desirable ‘to have an increased integration of the forces of defence of the Mercosur, in order to promote, in an articulated way, the security of the region.’ We will see in the first section of chapter seven how the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse’s presentation of security as regional, interconnected and merging with defence, enabled an increased institutionalisation of the regionalisation process in Mercosur; an increase that was then constricted by the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse hegemonic in Unasur.

Conclusion

To conclude this part on the official regional ‘basic discourses’ in West Africa and South America, the differences between the two regions appear significant. In West Africa there is a hegemonic ‘securitisation of community’ discourse, occasionally challenged by a more defensive and outward looking older discourse. The hegemonic discourse is founded on a community and on a securitisation element mutually reinforcing each other to demonstrate that the building of a regional community around consensual norms and a clear supranationality is necessary for the survival of the region, its security and its development. It opens the way for the regionalisation of foreign and security policies based on the elaboration of regional plans, strategies and intervention, institutionalised dialogue, and a normative regional order binding to the member states.

In South America two discourses overlap and compete against each other in both organisations. The dominant one, clearly hegemonic in Unasur, promotes a ‘unity in diversity’ that, while including a community element, restricts integration to mere cooperation through the strict respect of the sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs principles. It therefore suffers from a constant tension between these two elements which enable the second discourse on the ‘securitisation of integration’ to challenge it, in particular within Mercosur. These two discourses open the way for very different practices as whereas the former proposes the cohabitation and cooperation of sovereign states; the latter, by underlining the urgency, regional interdependence and the interconnectedness of security and defence issues, fosters integration and regional action in the political, security and defence fields.

The comparison of the regional organisations’ official discourses also demonstrates how both regions are part of an international community with its own discourses which provide for a particular meaning for concepts such as ‘regional integration’ and ‘security’. The regional organisations draw on these registers of speech, using the same concepts and elements located in the international community discourse(s). They however, articulate it differently to constitute different practices according to the political project of the relevant actors. This chapter showed the similarities and differences in the articulations of these concepts that frame the regionalisation process in both regions; while the next chapter will study how these different articulations are produced through the encounters between regional actors and the most influential ‘external’ actors.

What this chapter sought to show as well is the underlying tension between integration and sovereignty that appears to be inherent to any regionalisation process, including the European project where the two dynamics of supranationalism and

inter-governmentalism overlap. Integration can be seen as supporting the member states, but also as threatening their sovereignty and autonomy. This tension can balance on one side or the other and thereby produce very different effects in terms of practices of regionalisation: supranationalism *versus* inter-governmentalism, cooperation *versus* integration, regional planning *versus* national planning and so on; with most practices located in between these poles. The ‘basic discourses’ always relate to ‘community’ and ‘security’ elements that justify integration (or cooperation) as straightforward and natural, or necessary for the survival and prosperity of the member states. However, depending on their articulation with the nation and its sovereignty they can further or hinder the process of regionalisation; for instance, with ‘community’ referring to a protective platform of harmoniously coexisting sovereign states or to the creation of a regional political community. It is also notable that the articulation with a threatening Other is not enough to promote further regionalisation; illustrated by the role of the US in the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse which does not provide enough ground to go beyond mere cooperation. The concept of security/defence (often associated with development) is central in these discourses but what matters is its conceptualisation as something national or regional that can tip the balance either on the integration or on the sovereignty side. This conceptualisation is located at the intersection of the official, regional and international discourses and is a site of tension and competition that constitutes the practices of foreign and security policy regionalisation in both regions, as we will see in the following chapters.

Chapter 6. The actors of the regionalisation process

Introduction

After analysing in chapter five the regional official ‘basic discourses’ in West Africa and South America, this chapter seeks to understand how these discourses framing the regionalisation process emerged, how are they being (re)produced, by which actors and for which purpose?

A wide range of actors, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the regions participate in the constitution of the West African and South American regionalisation processes. However, as underlined in chapters two and three, it appears difficult to analyse the discourse of all the member states of the regional organisations and the international actors involved in South America and West Africa. My position was thus – following the region-building approach – to provide an in-depth analysis of the discourses of the most influential actors, while contrasting it, when necessary, with the positions of other actors. On the one side, Brazil and Nigeria are the two clear regional powers in South America and West Africa.¹¹⁴ They do not define by themselves the entire regionalisation process inasmuch as there is always room for manoeuvre for other states, but they provide the field of possibilities for the regionalisation process: any important decision or shift regarding the regional organisations should meet their approval. This chapter shows how their discourses and representations closely constitute the official regional ‘basic discourses’ outlined in chapter five.

¹¹⁴ Nigeria counts for more than half of the West African population with 168,8 million people and has become the first African economy in 2014 with more than two third of the West African Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Brazil has the first population with 200,4 million people (half of the South American population); it is also the 7th world economy and almost half of the South American GDP (World Bank 2014).

On the other side, various ‘external’ actors also play a role in the two regions. Whereas the EU is present in both regions, as a model and as an active actor with the objective to frame the regionalisation process and give agency to the regional organisations on its own model, it exerts considerably more influence in West Africa than in South America – which can be explained through its interactions with the regional powers. In South America, conversely, other actors also have an influential role: the US’ discourse on security and cooperation (by itself and through the Organisation of American States (OAS)) also participates in constituting the process of regionalisation. The analysis of the discourses of these ‘external’ actors will focus on the elements that contribute to the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America, and will therefore be less extensive than the analysis of Nigeria and Brazil’s discourse.

Hence, the object of this chapter is to examine the discourses and representations of these different actors and their encounter in order to show how they (re)produce the process of regionalisation of foreign and security policies, thereby enabling or constraining regional practices. These interactions can show a convergence, which is the case in West Africa between Nigeria and the EU, leading to the emergence of a regional political community; but also a divergence with tensions that translate to the level of the regional official discourse. The effect of this tension in South America is a strict limitation of the regionalisation process.

The first section of this chapter analyses Brazil’s and Nigeria’s discourses, in particular their narratives linking the region to the nation/state, its security and its development. The second section of the chapter examines the discourses of the main international actors and their interactions with regional powers in order to understand

how this frames the official regional discourses. These international actors are the EU in West Africa and the EU, the OAS and the US in South America.

I. An analysis of the regional powers' discourses: concepts of state/nation, region, security and development.

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the discourses of Nigeria and Brazil. It focuses in particular on their representation of the region and its security, and how these elements are articulated in correspondence with their development project and their historical experience as a nation. The dominant 'basic discourses' identified in this analysis frame these regional powers' policy towards the regionalisation process.

1. Nigeria

This part on Nigeria shows how one hegemonic 'basic discourse' structures Nigeria's representation of the region and its security. It includes two main elements that reinforce each other: the representation of an inseparable nexus between national and regional security connected to Nigeria's development project; and the representation of Nigeria as the necessary regional leader for West Africa. Lastly, this discourse is historically contextualised with a particular focus on Nigeria's experience of its Civil War.

i. The national/regional security nexus: the vulnerability of Nigeria

Both Nigerian officials and the Nigerian academic discourse produce a constant articulation between national and regional security according to which each national threat has a trans-national or regional dimension, and where it is assumed that any regional security issue can affect the stability and security of Nigeria. This is the core element of the Nigerian hegemonic discourse. Illustrating this articulation, former

Minister of Defence, Dr. Haliru Mohammed Bello (2012, 8) cites among the defence policy objectives of the country ‘Ensuring security and stability in the West African sub-region through collective security.’ Similarly, in a speech at Chatham House, former Minister of Defense, Dr. Erelu Olusola Obada (2013), defines ‘Regional security, by way of combatting terrorism and other transnational crimes’ as a strategic interest of Nigeria’, while even ‘internal fragilities, illegal trafficking, piracy, unreported and unregulated fishing, Islamic fundamentalism, oil theft and pipeline vandalism as well as terrorism’ are often ‘transnational in nature’. This discourse is also recurrent in the work of Nigerian scholars where national and regional security are constantly represented as inseparable (Bah 2005; Fawole 2008) – as was already shown in chapter four (that analysed the work of both West African and international scholars).

This articulation produces a clear policy effect characterised by the assertion that these security issues cannot be dealt with at the national level anymore. The terrorist challenge for instance - the most cited security issue – needs regional cooperation because of its transnational dimension. The links between Boko Haram,¹¹⁵ present in the Northeast of the country, and Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) operating in the Sahel are usually emphasised by Nigerian officials who highlight the need to cooperate regionally to avoid spill over in terms of weapons circulation and radicalisation (Nigerian Representative 2013; Nigerian military official 2013). Joint actions should include border cooperation with neighbouring countries as well as regional interventions such the ECOWAS intervention in Mali (Obada 2013, 4).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Boko Haram, an Islamist sect and terrorist organisation founded in 2002 has been organising violent actions (kidnaping, bomb attacks, etc.) in the North of Nigeria and beyond. Its explicit aim is to establish the Sharia (already applied in the Northern states) in the whole of Nigeria.

¹¹⁶ In January 2012, secessionist Tuareg groups in Northern Mali launched a rebellion against the central government. The rebellion was soon taken over by Islamist groups such as AQIM and Ansar Dine. After the rebellion started threatening the capital Bamako, the French government launched a

Similarly, other threats referred to as major security issues for Nigeria, such as organised criminality including drug, human, small arms and light weapons (SALW) trafficking, crude oil theft and piracy, would also need a common response at the regional level as stated by Nigerian President Jonathan (Nigeriafirst 2011) who stresses ‘an urgent need for ECOWAS leaders to evolve a concerted strategy for the mobilization of efforts to address the challenges of corruption, trans-border crimes, the proliferation of small arms, (...)’

This nexus is linked to a representation of Nigeria’s vulnerability to regional events. The fear, for instance, that SALW trafficking nourishes the conflict in the Niger Delta¹¹⁷ where most of the Nigerian oil is located, as well as terrorism in Northern Nigeria (Fawole 2008, 104-105; Nigerian Representative 2013; Nigerian military officer 2013). This articulation connecting national and regional security presents the stability of the West African region as necessary for the security of Nigeria. Therefore raising concerns with the stability of the fragile democratic regimes in West African states where new coups d’état mean an increase in small arms trafficking, thousands of refugees, mercenaries, etc., that would endanger Nigeria’s security. A concern clearly stated in the interviews conducted with Nigerian officials is that: ‘If there is a crisis in the region, Nigeria will suffer, if there is instability in Nigeria, the rest of West Africa would suffer. So a stable West Africa is in the interest of Nigeria’ (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a). Another official added that ‘We [West African states] are into a marriage in which divorce is not possible’ (Nigerian diplomatic official 2013). These representations of regional and interconnected threats have led Nigerian officials to promote a regional and

military intervention in January 2013 in support of the Malian government. They were soon joined by an African-led mission (AFISMA) under the command of Nigeria and now replaced by a United Nations mission (MINUSMA).

¹¹⁷ In the Niger Delta, militant groups making demands for an increasing redistribution of oil income buy these weapons to support their actions against the federal government.

comprehensive approach to security issues through ECOWAS – constituting the dominant ‘securitisation of community’ discourse analysed in the last chapter.

The last element of this articulation is the connection between this national/regional security nexus and development: the urgency to deal with these threats stems from the close connection maintained between security and development in the Nigerian discourse. They are conceptualised as inseparable – security being a pre-condition for development. In this way, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ogwu (2006) claimed that ‘West Africa has experienced conflicts for many years as a result of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the sub-region. We believe that the restoration and sustenance of peace are critical for socio-economic development in the sub-region.’ Similarly, former Nigerian President Yar’Adua (2009) emphasises that ‘we [West African states] cannot meaningfully anticipate sustainable development without first entrenching peace, stability and security across our region.’

Hence, security is conceptualised as regional as well as intrinsically linked to the development of Nigeria: security, development and integration are articulated in a narrative that intertwines the three concepts in the same process – one cannot happen without the two others. According to Obi (2008, 189) some of the technocrats working for the post-civil war (1967-70) Nigerian military government convinced the decision-makers of the strategic importance of connecting an economic cooperation and integration project to its larger project of national development and security. Indeed, the development project promoted by Nigeria is not a national project, the conception it has of its development unfolds within the West African region. For example, President Jonathan (2011) calls for ‘the creation of a sub-region without frontiers where people could have access to its resources and creates opportunities for

social production and jobs in the framework of equitable distribution system.’ Former President Yar’Adua (quoted in allAfrica 2007) previously commented that ‘we need to open up our borders by intensifying movement and communication among our peoples.’ These speeches, amongst others, reiterate the idea of the opening or ending of frontiers and borders necessary for the West African and Nigerian development project – an idea that is common in the Nigerian discourse. To some extent, it desacralises the border and thereby the sovereignty principle, it opens the way for regional policies, not only in the economic field but also in the security field, as the two are perceived as inseparable by Nigerian officials. The intertextual links between the Nigerian hegemonic discourse and the ECOWAS ‘securitisation of community’ discourse are very apparent here.

ii. Nigeria’s self-representation as a regional leader

The perception of vulnerability highlighted above comes with a sense of responsibility from Nigerian officials stressing their role in the stability of the sub-region from the first interventions in Liberia¹¹⁸ and Sierra Leone in the 1990s to the more recent ones in Guinea-Bissau (2012) and in Mali (2013). Nigeria is traditionally depicted by its politicians, diplomats and militaries as the clear and unchallenged leader of West Africa which has the responsibility to provide for peace and stability to the region beyond its own frontiers: a ‘Pax Nigeriana’¹¹⁹ (Adebajo 2000, 191); thereby making the ‘opening of borders’ straightforward for Nigeria as the key actor of this space. As a result, Nigeria invested heavily in its regional policy, in particular

¹¹⁸ Yoroms (1993, 86-88) shows for example how the first intervention in Liberia was justified in these terms.

¹¹⁹ ‘Pax Nigeriana’ is a term coined by a former Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Bolaji Akinyemi (1985-87) to describe Nigeria’s leadership role in the continent.

since the nationalisation of its oil industry in the 1970s.¹²⁰ Show and Fasehun (1980, 552) point to the fact that ‘since independence, one characteristic of Nigeria’s international position has been taken as a constant by almost all analysts – its greatness.’ This greatness is seen as giving Nigeria some responsibility as well as rights in West Africa. This element was already emphasised by influential scholars in the 1980s such as Olusanya and Akindele (1986, 3) who wrote that ‘As a dominant regional power in West Africa, Nigeria’s security boundaries cannot and should not be said to be coterminous with her territorial boundaries; the former extends beyond the later.’ Accordingly, the principle of non-interference should not get in the way of this acknowledgement.

Nowadays, Nigeria’s highest officials constantly (re)produce this image. As former President Yar’adua puts it: ‘Nigeria will continue to play a leading role in promoting peace and political stability in the West African sub-region. (...) We must not allow fresh disruption of the peace in West Africa’ (quoted in allAfrica 2007); while former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ajumogobia (2010) claimed that ‘Nigeria has unquestionably provided the leadership and diplomatic clout to advance the peace, stability, common security and prosperity of all its neighbours (...).’

Nigeria’s representation of its vulnerability, responsibility and leadership led to the assertion of the country as the regional leader or ‘big brother’ of the region – a common metaphor used by Nigerian officials referring to their weaker ‘siblings’ in

¹²⁰ The expansion of Nigeria’s economy reached its highest level in the 1970s with the oil wealth that followed the discovery of oil in 1956 and the oil crisis in 1973. This enabled the Nigerian government to assert its status in the sub-region through ‘oil diplomacy’ – providing oil to its neighbours at concessionary rates and giving economic assistance (Adebajo 2008, 9); funding 70% of ECOWAS budget, as well as financing and providing the vast majority of the armed forces for the ECOMOG missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone at a moment, in the beginning of the 1990s, where neither the United Nations nor the US were willing to intervene in Africa (Bah 2005, 78-79; Francis 2006, 13-14). Today, the Nigerian government provides more than a third of ECOWAS’ budget and continues to provide economic assistance to its neighbours (Adebajo 2000, 186-187). It is still the main ECOWAS provider of funding, and military and human resources to ECOWAS most recent missions in Mali and Guinea-Bissau.

West Africa (Adebajo 2008, 13; Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a; Nigerian Senator 2013; Nigerian political official 2013). The sacrifices made by Nigeria and its selflessness in protecting the region are often emphasised by Nigerian officials to legitimise their position (Nigerian Senator 2013; Nigerian National Defence College official 2013). This representation also informs the general foreign policy doctrine that underlies Nigeria's foreign and security policy thinking, the concentric circles doctrine: 1/Nigeria; 2/ECOWAS; 3/Africa; 4/The international stage – ECOWAS being associated with its most vital interests (Gambari 2008, 70). This 'concentrism', initially adopted in 1984, replaced the former doctrine that focused exclusively on Africa as a 'centrepiece' or 'cornerstone' (Akinterinwa 2004, 435). The shift towards West Africa started after the civil war, as will be explained in the next subpart, and was justified in the following terms by the then head of government, General Buhari:

'At the epicentre of these circles are the national economic and economic interest of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which are inextricably tied up with the security, stability and economic and social well being of our immediate neighbours with which we share identical stability and peace.'
(quoted in: Akinterinwa 2004, 436)

This doctrine resulted in an unquestioned and constant involvement in regional security issues that can be illustrated by the statement of a Nigerian Senator (2013) who is also a member of the ECOWAS Parliament: 'Politically speaking we are regional leaders, it is important to ensure the stability of the region, it has to be so.'

While the sense of vulnerability, responsibility and the leadership discourse have become strongly rooted and hegemonic within Nigeria's small elite circle since the Civil War, this consensus has been challenged. Indeed, since the 1980s a growing dissatisfaction has emerged among the Nigerian citizenry criticising the Nigerian government's regional policies. For instance, ECOMOG's interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, led by Nigeria, were criticised as diverting Nigerian resources

towards the region at the expense of tackling its own poverty, inequalities, and security issues (Yoroms 1993, 90; Synge 1999, 56; Adebajo 2000, 195-196). Nowadays, the internal conflicts in the Niger Delta and in the North of the country with Boko Haram, have contributed to triggering again this perception among the population (Nigerian political official 2013b; ECOWAS official 2013). Without reaching the state of becoming a coherent contesting discourse prominent among the elite circle,¹²¹ this discontent has already led to actions contradictory to Nigeria's regional leadership and policy. For instance, in the context of the economic problems in the 1980s,¹²² the Nigerian government took the decision to close its border and expel nearly 3 millions immigrants, who were declared 'illegal aliens' and who were mainly West African, with this endangering the commitment to a future free circulation area (Gambari 1989, 38; Adebajo 2000, 187). Another example is Nigeria's progressive withdrawal from the ECOMOG operation in Sierra Leone (1999) (Synge 1999, 56; Adebajo 2000, 195). However, while scholars in the 1990s attribute this regional interventionism to Nigerian military leaders – and predicted a change following Nigeria's transition to democracy (Synge 1999, 56; Adebajo 2000, 196-196) – it seems that the democratisation of the country in 1999 has not breached this consensus. Instead of turning Nigeria more inwards, it increased its commitment to the region and to the institutionalisation of ECOWAS.¹²³ Hence, while the dominant 'basic discourse' connecting the national/regional security nexus to

¹²¹ A very weak contesting discourse must exist in Nigerian official circles but because of the hegemony of the main 'basic discourse' and maybe as well the secrecy and suspiciousness of Nigerian officials it was almost impossible to grasp during the field research.

¹²² Following the decrease of oil prices in the 80s, Nigeria plunged in an economic crisis and became heavily indebted to Western bilateral donor and international financial institutions. It had to decrease as a consequence its assistance to neighbours and lower its political role in the sub-region and in Africa (Adebajo 2008, 11).

¹²³ 1999 was a turning point for the establishment of the ECOWAS peace and security architecture. Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999 was key to enable this shift (most of other West African countries already initiated their transition to democracy in the early 90s like Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali).

Nigerian leadership is occasionally challenged, it is still hegemonic in Nigeria's elite circle. The next section shows the construction of this consensus from Nigeria's civil war.

iii. The construction of the Nigerian state and its security discourse

The national/regional security nexus and the regional leadership discourse can be traced to Nigeria's representation of its construction as a state and the development of its security thinking. After independence in 1960, Nigerian armed forces were minimal as there was no reflection on, or expectation to fight a war or defend the country against foreign attacks (Aluko 1971, 178; Fawole 2008, 97). The civil war (1967-70) with the secession of the Southeastern part of Nigeria under the name of Republic of Biafra¹²⁴ radically changed the understanding Nigerian leaders had of their national security, introducing a sense of vulnerability that did not exist before. The key element in this shift was the role of France, who helped the secessionist region of Biafra, with the French government using Nigeria's francophone neighbours, such as Côte d'Ivoire, as a basis for its support to Biafra (Aluko 1971, 178; Obi 2008, 184). Aluko (1971, 178) shows how the Nigerian government drew some conclusions from the Civil War: first, that the country's survival as a sovereign and independent state could no longer be taken for granted; second, that Nigeria needed substantial armed forces; third, that it needed friendly neighbours. Consequently, in the following decades, Nigeria's foreign policy started focusing on maintaining close relations with its neighbours and controlling events happening in the West African region in order to impede such a situation from happening again. Thus, according to Obi (2008, 188), from the 1970s a 'new phase emerged in the country's security thinking that connected its national interests in the post-

¹²⁴ The war started in 1967 when the Nigerian government launched an operation to recover the seceding territories, which they succeed to do in 1970.

decolonization period with aspirations for regional leadership,' associated with the intention to create a sphere of influence where its national security could be guaranteed.

The importance of this event in Nigeria's foreign and security policy representations is noticeable as it is referenced as a major turning point in all academic books on Nigeria's foreign policy. Notably, it is presented as the point of departure of its foreign policy doctrine of 'concentricism' placing West Africa as the first circle of interest for Nigeria (Osuntokun 2008, 144; Fawole 2008, 99, etc.). The Civil War was thus a trauma that was politically processed in such a way that it triggered a reassessment of Nigeria's foreign and security policy that still holds on until today (Gambari 1989, 7). The trauma with French intervention in particular is clearly seen in official statements: General Obasanjo who was a military commander during the Civil War, the military head of state from 1976 to 1979 and the first President after re-democratisation (1999-2007), stated in 1980 that 'It was (...) in their [the French] interest to cut Nigeria to size by dismembering her and reducing her influence in francophone Africa' (quoted in Adebajo 2000, 186). This strong sense of vulnerability and defencelessness clearly produced the 'defensive integration' discourse, analysed in the last chapter, which remained dominant until the late 1990s.

From this moment, Nigeria constantly considered West Africa's stability as necessary for its own security and development. It led to the creation of ECOWAS in 1975 (Yoroms 1993, 84) – including all West African states, Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone – with the aim of undertaking a rapprochement with francophone countries and providing a forum where Nigeria would be the indisputable leader and therefore protect its interests. Aluko (1971, 188) shows that

prior to the Civil War Nigeria had a ‘good neighbour’ policy which was based on the same principles as those with other African countries. However, only in the wake of the civil war did Nigeria start to take an interest in the internal development of each West African country.¹²⁵ In particular it started promoting the economic development of these countries through economic assistance in order to reduce their dependence on European countries, in particular France (Aluko 1971, 187; Nwokedi 1985, 196).¹²⁶ This moment was foundational in Nigeria’s representation of a national/regional security nexus and its link with economic development.

Accordingly, in Nigeria’s discourse there is no tension between the concept of state and region as the region is presented as supporting (and necessary to) the Nigerian state, its security and development. To support this connection, borders are depicted as artificial and imposed by colonial powers (Obi 2008, 183) – leading to the representation of a West African community with Nigeria at its core and the need of ‘opening the borders’, as mentioned earlier. This representation builds on the still recent process of the construction of the states in West Africa, depicted in the Nigerian discourse as arbitrarily divided by the colonial powers and cutting across the different ethnic groups spread in the region. The conclusion drawn from this representation is that since West African states share the same past and the same problems, they should share the same future (Nigerian ECOWAS military official 2013a; Nigeria National Defence College official 2013). Aluko (1971, 190) shows that, just after the Civil War, Nigerian leaders already started emphasising the pre-

¹²⁵ Even though at this point the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Arikpo insisted that the setting up of a sub-regional economic community should be done without prejudice to the later establishment of an African-wide common market (Aluko 1971, 189). An element which is present in the ECOWAS ‘defensive integration’ discourse stressing the primacy of the OAU.

¹²⁶ At this time all Francophone West African states were extremely dependent on France: on its development assistance, but also financially because of their membership to the franc zone system. They also had defence agreements with France (Aluko 1971, 189-190; Adebajo 2000, 187). As a response to the creation of ECOWAS, France publicly promoted the creation of the Community of West African States (CEAO) including only the Francophone states (Nwokedi 1985, 201).

colonial ties of history, geography, tradition and culture with their francophone neighbours. This community element in the Nigerian discourse was aimed at deconstructing the Francophone/Anglophone dichotomy and partly succeeded through its shaping of the ECOWAS ‘securitisation of community’ discourse.

To conclude, the strong sense of vulnerability of Nigeria leading to the perceived necessity to gain more legitimacy in West Africa in order to protect itself against extra-regional intervention contributes to explaining Nigeria’s promotion of a high degree of institutionalisation in ECOWAS and its supranational dimension (with a departure from the sovereignty and non-interference principles). It is represented as the only way to get the support of all West African states – including the francophone countries – as well as to be recognised as the legitimate leader of West Africa by the international community¹²⁷ and thereby ensuring its vital economic and security interests. This was confirmed during interviews with Nigerian ECOWAS officials: one commented that due to the supranational decision-making process Nigeria did not have a veto power, it was ‘one country, one vote.’ As a result, and in spite of its contributions, Nigeria could not always have its own way within ECOWAS, which was necessary in order to gain the support of the other states (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013b).

Nigeria’s political project for the region has been rather successful as Francophone states have committed to ECOWAS, which is now acknowledged as the main regional organisation in the political and security field with the legitimacy to intervene in West Africa. Other member states are politically influential within ECOWAS and contribute to its peace and security architecture. They deploy, for

¹²⁷ A legitimacy that was weakened by the humanitarian disaster of the Civil War in Biafra. Nigeria’s bad reputation was further reinforced following the military government harsh response to the demands of activist groups in the Niger Delta, in particular after the hanging of the leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists in 1995 (Fawole 2008, 104-105).

instance, diplomatic efforts in terms of mediation, and are generally encouraged by Nigeria to do so. This, for example, has been the case of Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore in respect of the Togo crisis (2005-06), Côte d'Ivoire (2006), Guinea (2008), and in Mali now where he is the ECOWAS mediator. Likewise, Ivorian President, Alassane Ouattara, was in 2013 a very active francophone chairman of ECOWAS,¹²⁸ working cooperatively with Nigeria as well as with the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Burkinabe Ouedraogo, on a range of issues including Mali (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013). Moreover, if one looks at the Political Affairs Peace and Security (PAPS) Department of the ECOWAS Commission, while many high-level officials are indeed Nigerian, all nationalities are well-represented (Burkinabe ECOWAS military officer 2013). Even though tensions still exist between Anglophone and Francophone states, as well as criticisms of Nigeria's unilateralism, there is general recognition of the need for Nigeria's leadership (Adebajo 2000, 194; Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013b). This recognition, together with the amount of resources the Nigerian government is committing to ECOWAS, as well as its acceptance of supranationalism, enables it to rather consensually constitute the regionalisation process through ECOWAS.

2. Brazil

This part shows how in Brazil, conversely to Nigeria, security, defence and development are connected to a national project instead to a regional one. The analysis of Brazil's foreign policy traditions, autonomy and universalism, provides some contextualisation to this dominant Brazilian 'basic discourse' which entails a constant tension between sovereignty and integration. We will see that a contesting

¹²⁸ The new chairman is now President of Ghana John Dramani Mahama.

discourse also exists challenging this narrative by linking the development and security of Brazil to the region.

i. Security, defence and development as national projects

In Brazil, like in Nigeria, a narrative articulates a link between security, defence and development. The articulation, however, takes an alternative path in the case of Brazil with different effects in terms of practices of regionalisation: on the one side, in the dominant Brazilian discourse, security and defence are kept separated; on the other side, they are both connected to development but as a purely national project.

Security and defence are presented in the dominant Brazilian discourse as being different by nature. On the one hand, defence aims at the protection of the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the independence of the Brazilian nation (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2008; Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012). The specific targets of this policy are the protection of Amazonia and its natural resources against a potential extra-regional invasion or attempt at its internationalisation (Brazilian Colonel 2012a; Brazilian General 2012b)¹²⁹ and the so-called ‘Blue Amazonia,’ the Atlantic Ocean where Brazil recently discovered new oil and gas reserves, also known as the pré-sal (Brazilian General 2012b). The National Defence Strategy (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2008, 5) thus emphasises that:

‘Brazil will be vigilant in the unconditional re-affirmation of its sovereignty on the Brazilian Amazonia. It will reject, through actions of development and defence, any attempts to supervise its decisions concerning the preservation, development and defence of the Amazonia. It will not allow organisations or individuals to be used as instruments of foreign interests – political and economic – that want to weaken the sovereignty of Brazil.’

¹²⁹ Miyamoto (2000, 431-457) shows well how the Amazonia has been at the centre of the Brazilian government’s constant attention since the 1960s. The Brazilian government started showing increased signs of uneasiness while facing intense critics from NGOs and Western governments on the way it was dealing with Amazonia. Brazil responded by launching development projects and positioning troops at the borders. From the 1980s onwards, the Amazonia became the central security issue in Brazilian military circles (Marques 2003, 75).

Brazil's defence policy thus has a strong defensive stance placing territorial integrity and sovereignty at the core of its objectives as if they were immediately under threat. Military officers recurrently emphasise this threat pointing to the context of natural resource scarcity and the increasing needs of developed countries. According to a Brazilian General (2012c) and public figure, the risk is important for Brazil, with not only the US, but also European states such as France who already have a foot in the region with French Guyana.¹³⁰

To reach these objectives the Brazilian discourse constantly asserts the necessity for Brazil to build its military capacities in order to have a dissuasive force towards potential extra-regional intervention, as well as promote the independence of Brazil. This very national project acknowledges to some extent the need for regional cooperation but only in some specific areas: the development of the defence industry; dialogue, cooperation and exchange in order to build trust and maintain regional stability¹³¹ (Brazilian diplomat 2012g; Brazilian General 2012a); protection against potential extra-regional involvement; and increase of negotiating power. To achieve these aims the White Book on National Defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 34) promotes:

‘close cooperation with neighbouring states also in the military area, with views to constitute a bloc that present itself together at the global level when treating themes of defence, with capacities to dissuade external

¹³⁰ This defensive stance was always put forward during interviews with Brazilian military officials who consensually share this geopolitical thinking. A Brazilian General (General 2012a) started the interview by justifying the necessity of a strong defence policy with the example of colonisation: ‘we were living peacefully in Brazil and suddenly people from the Iberian peninsula appear here, surprised us at this moment when we didn’t have a strategy to receive these visitors. They arrived, occupied the area, took possession (...). (...) Today we need a national defence strategy.’

¹³¹ The importance given to regional stability in Brazil’s representations is linked to the perceived necessity to impede extra-regional power such as the US to meddle in South American affairs; it is however not presented as a common good (Spektor 2010, 36). Villa and Viana (2010, 93-94) show that this representation was partly at the origin of Brazil’s promotion of South American integration and the shift of its diplomatic stance from strict non-intervention to ‘non-intervention without indifference’.

interference and with reinforced power of negotiation in international forums.’

Regional cooperation understood in this way is strongly supported by Brazilian military officers as a useful instrument to support Brazil’s sovereignty and independence (Brazilian General 2012b; Brazilian General 2012c).

On the other hand, security is presented as a purely internal concept directed at issues such as crime or illegal trafficking that should be dealt with by the police not the armed forces. Therefore, in contrast to the Nigerian discourse, the Brazilian discourse does not conceptualise transnational threats as a regional problem but as a national internal issue requiring some cooperation with neighbouring countries. For instance, in the ceremony launching the recent ‘Borders Strategic Plan,’ President Rousseff (2011) declared:

I believe that Brazil and all the border countries, the ten neighbouring countries of Brazil, have today extremely fraternal and cooperative relations, and the conditions are present to – (...) – enable us to structure with our friendly neighbours a coordinated action, an efficient action, a firm action that will allow us, in fact, to fight all the forms of organized crime that choose the borders as the most fragile regions and therefore the most appropriate for its action.’

Rousseff does not speak here about ‘collective security’ or regional actions or plans. The Plan for Brazilian borders only allows for cooperation with neighbouring countries – limited to exchange of information or trust building measures. This weak commitment is also highlighted in the Brazilian White Book on Defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 28) which acknowledges the danger of transnational crime for Brazil without mentioning regional cooperation, only the necessity of ‘coordinated policies between the different organs of the government’ – therefore presenting the answer as exclusively internal. Most officials interviewed stressed the need and the efficiency of low level institutionalised bilateral cooperation in dealing

with these issues that are primarily national (Brazilian General 2012a; Brazilian diplomat 2012g; Brazilian diplomat 2012d).

Three different elements in the dominant Brazilian discourse provide a rationale for this separation between security and defence: first, a reference to the decades of military regimes from 1964 to 1985 which associated national security with the fight against the internal enemy and used the armed forces to this pursuit.¹³² This was frequently mentioned in the interviews; a Brazilian diplomat (2012d), for instance, mentioned that: ‘For people in my generation if you talk about “ley de segurança nacional”, [national security law] it is something that brings bad memories’; second, a claim that doing the work of the police would threaten and lower the status of the armed forces; third, and mostly, an unwillingness to involve the armed forces in the fight against transnational security issues and thus securitise problems that are not military threats. The White Book on National Defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 31) states for example that:

‘An important tendency since the 1990s has been the “securitisation” of the topics at the UN. This tendency, driven in particular by the permanent members, consists in bringing to the Security Council topics that, by their nature, should be treated in other instances of the UN and in specialised organisms. The “securitisation” should be considered carefully.’

This argument is widely relayed in high-ranking military circles. A Brazilian General (2012c) criticised that ‘today security has expanded, everything became security, you have energy security, food security, etc’. According to him the concept of ‘new threats’ was created by NATO to replace the USSR as an enemy; he finished by claiming that:

‘for us, I don’t see that as threats: organised crime, terrorism, human rights, social problems are problems for the armed forces. But it does not

¹³² During the military governments the conception of national security was based on a fundamentally anti-communist doctrine targeting any opposition to the regime in place (Miyamoto 2000, 434, 440). This doctrine was based on the ‘ley de segurança nacional’ (the national security law).

compare with the threat posed by another country; they are not threats, they are problems.’

A Brazilian Colonel (2012a) also used this argument to clearly state the limits of integration, insisting there would be integration of defence only if there were common threats. However,

‘if we consider the so-called new threats, they can be considered common interests: drug trafficking, weapons, terrorism, etc. (...). But the fight is not militarised for Brazil, it does not consider that the fight against drug trafficking or organised crime is a military question.’

He concluded that ‘South America does not constitute a regional security complex due to this difference of threat perceptions’, threats being here ‘real’ i.e. military threats.

These arguments consistently appear in official documents and in interviews. They relate to a fear for Brazil’s sovereignty and independence. Indeed, if these issues become represented as a regional problem, this shift would include a recognition of the interdependence between South American states; if they are securitised it would give them a sense of urgency, opening the door for the employment of the armed forces. The concern is thus that foreign powers such as the US, who promote the use of the military and are already heavily present in Colombia to assist the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism, could use this to interfere in Amazonia but also at the Triple Border where most of Brazil’s natural resources are located. This preoccupation was underlined by a diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012g) concerned with cooperation against drug trafficking in South America, which he saw as complicated by the ‘divisive presence of the DEA.’¹³³ A Brazilian colonel (2012b)

¹³³ The DEA is the US Drug Enforcement Agency.

also insisted on the ‘contingences, external pressures, problems (...) that push our [Brazilian] armed forces increasingly to be police forces.’¹³⁴

While the interactions between Brazil, the US and the OAS on security will be examined in more detail later in the last section of this chapter, these arguments also illustrate the role of the academic discourse in the constitution of the regionalisation process. In particular, the concepts of ‘securitisation’ and ‘regional security complex’, derived from the Regional Security Complexes Theory literature, have become part of the vocabulary of practitioners who utilise them as scarecrows to limit the possibility of regional integration in the area of security. Interestingly, as we saw, the official West African regional discourse also draws on the RSC’s assumptions, but to justify regionalisation.

Lastly, this articulation is completed by the connection between security/defence and development which is constantly made in official discourses. In a speech, Minister of Defence Celso Amorim (2012) claimed that: ‘We [Brazil] have to build with these regions [South America and West Africa] a real “belt of good will,” that guarantees our security and allow us to continue without stumbling on the path of development.’ Security and development are here presented as inseparable. This is one of the key dimensions of the National Defence Strategy and of the White Book on Defence. The former states that:

‘The national defence strategy is inseparable from the national development strategy. (...) They reinforce each other. (...). Defended, Brazil will be able to say no when it has to say no. It will have the capacity to build its own model of development. (...) A strong project of

¹³⁴ A Brazilian diplomat (2012d) also emphasised the activism of Brazil in separating the different councils of Unasur against the wishes of other states such as Colombia – the main partner of the US in the region. This activism resulted in the creation of three different councils: one on defence, one on drugs and one on transnational crimes. The aim was, in particular, not to securitise the issue of drug trafficking. Another Brazilian diplomat (2012a), critical of this division acknowledged that this conception of defence and security is against the US: ‘We don’t like that the US come meddle and ask us to do something at the Triple Border.’

defence favours a strong development project.’ (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2008, 1-2).

The development project is then defined by the principles constituting the tradition of ‘national independence’ presented as the main axis of development. What we find here is a narrative linking development, security/defence and national independence which constitutes the dominant ‘basic discourse’ on regionalisation in Brazil: Brazil needs a strong defence policy to foster its national independence and autonomy in order to be able to promote its own model of development. Contrarily to Nigeria, development in Brazil is conceptualised essentially in national terms, and so is its defence policy that is closely linked to the development project. Miyamoto (2000, 443) shows well that the nexus between security and development has been present since the coup d’état in 1964 and throughout the successive military governments up until today.

Nevertheless, this attempt at a strict separation between security and defence is subjected to many tensions with the, occasionally, interchangeable use of the two concepts in the official discourse and the increasing use of the armed forces to deal with crime not only within Brazil’s urban centres, but also at the borders in Amazonia with the growing concern caused by guerrillas and drug trafficking. Most diplomats and military officers find it difficult to reconcile these tensions appearing between the official discourse, external pressures and changes of practice. A diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012d) commented in this way:

‘when you talk about security what is understood is about a question of crime, fighting internal crime. When we talk about defence, we talk about relations with the outside. Of course in the UN you have the Security Council. But we have the concern in Brazil, coming from the past that it would not be a good idea to get the military too much involved in the police work dealing with crime. But then you would be entitled to ask: what is the military doing in the favelas in Rio? I don’t have the answer to that, but they are doing a good job there. I don’t know to what extent you

can maintain this separation but there is a concern there, and there are good reasons.'

Hence, this dominant discourse is being challenged from within by a competing articulation, which is almost absent from official documents, but appeared during the interviews conducted with high-ranking Brazilian military officers and diplomats. Some of them firmly emphasise the need for a new concept acknowledging the 'realities' of interdependence and the interconnection between security and defence in dealing with issues such as drug trafficking and terrorism (Brazilian diplomat 2012d; Brazilian General 2012b). A colonel (Brazilian colonel 2012b) declared that:

'These definitions are coming to an end, they are being revised here. Why? Because the old generation with state wars, the world war (...), speak in terms of defence of the homeland turned towards state threats. Thus they wanted to separate the activities of the police from the activities of defence (...). The scenario today is much more diffused, (...). (...) So this led to mixing these concepts and today terrorism is a state threat but what is it: defence or security? (...). This difference security, defence (...) in practice it already fell.'

The result of these tensions and competing discourses is that, as a Brazilian diplomat (2012a) commented, 'There is no unified concept of security and defence in Brazil, not for the diplomats nor for the militaries'. While the dominant conceptualisation of security/defence and development as purely national projects limit the possibilities of regional cooperation and institutionalisation, the resistance of Brazil to a merging between security and defence explains the lack of unified concept at the level of the official regional discourse as was shown in Chapter five, with this stuck between public security, citizen security and defence.

ii. The autonomy and universalism of Brazilian foreign policy: a constraint on regional integration and leadership

This representation of security/defence and development as exclusively national projects can only be understood in the context of the dominant traditions driving Brazil's foreign policy: autonomy and universalism. Celso Amorim's (2012) statement quoted earlier shows the primacy of these concepts on regional integration:

‘We [Brazil] have to build with these regions [South America and West Africa] a real ‘belt of good will’, that guarantees our security and allow us to continue without stumbling on the path of development.’

Here Amorim places South America and West Africa on the same level, ‘the belt of good will’, without specifying a special relation with South America. This representation is found in official documents and reiterated by Brazilian diplomats and military officers: they all emphasise the strategic environment of Brazil as being constituted by South America, the South Atlantic and the West Coast of Africa (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 12; Brazilian General 2012a). This relates to the concept of universalism in Brazilian foreign policy that drives Brazil's relations with South America as well as with other regions of the world. These relations contribute to the diversification of Brazil's external relations and thereby to its insertion on the international stage, a central objective of its foreign policy. According to these principles, South American neighbours are important to the extent they are part of Brazil's neighbourhood and can help its external projection as a regional platform supporting its ambitions such as having a seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Roussef 2011; Brazilian diplomat 2012c; Brazilian diplomat 2012g; Brazilian diplomat 2012e). However, this does not entail a qualitatively different

relationship with them in terms of institutionalisation.¹³⁵ Quite the opposite, the Brazilian discourse limits the possibility of such a thing to happen.

The constraining power of these concepts in Brazilian foreign policy is well shown by Vigevani, et al. (2008). They argue these concepts first furthered integration to the extent that integration from the 1980s was seen as helping Brazil's universalism and autonomy by enabling a stronger presence of the country in the world with the increased weight of the region supporting it – especially after a period during the Cold War when Brazil's foreign policy was almost exclusively aligned on the US. Nevertheless, these traditions are now an obstacle to deeper institutionalisation. A commitment to supranational bodies or the elaboration of regional policies would be in contradiction with the autonomy and sovereignty principles (Spektor 2010, 192). In their article on Brazilian thinking on regional integration Vigevani and Ramanzini Junior (2010, 474-477) also show that it is only recently, with figures such as Celso Lafer and Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães,¹³⁶ that integration has started to be associated with development. However, this association remains limited: integration can help development but development is still mostly a national project that should promote national independence.¹³⁷ Integration can support it to the extent that it does not threaten the autonomy and sovereignty of the nation.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Mercosur was represented as qualitatively different for a period of time after its creation, but since 2002 with President Lula's administration it is increasingly less so.

¹³⁶ Celso Lafer was twice foreign minister of Brazil; Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães was the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and later the High Representative of Mercosur. Gomes Saraiva (2010, 151) also shows that the idea of universalism as a model of international insertion was dominant in Brazil's foreign policy in the 20th Century. The possibility of regional integration as a platform for this insertion only started to be articulated in the 1980s.

¹³⁷ Vigevani and Ramanzini Junior (2010) analyse the main 'doctrines' of Brazil's development policy in the 20th century: the Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiros (Superior Institute of Brazilian Studies) with its national-developmental project, the 'Política Externa Independente' (Independent Foreign Policy), the doctrine of the Superior War School, ideas coming from the CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) as well as from the Brazilian theoreticians of dependency theory.

¹³⁸ See also on the concept of political autonomy in Brazilian foreign policy Vigevani and Cepaluni (2007, 275-276). They argue that political autonomy has been the central axis of Brazil's foreign policy since independence, throughout the Old Republic (1889-1930) and up until today.

This takes us back to the narrative underlined earlier articulating security/defence, development and national independence.

This universalism and autonomy constituting Brazilian foreign policy draws on a sense of ‘exceptionalism’ or ‘grand potential’ where Brazil sees itself as standing apart from its neighbours with whom it does not really share a language (Portuguese instead of Spanish) and a history. This conception of itself goes back to its independence story and its perceived singularity as a stable Empire in the middle of turbulent states constantly at war and shattered by regular coups d’état (Brazilian diplomat 2012a). It was then conceptualised by the military governments under Medici (1969-1974) with the concept of Brazil as a ‘*gran potencia*’ (great power) and then by Geisel (1974-1979) with his ‘*potencia emergence*’ (emerging power). This difference is still used as a point of reference justifying Brazil’s global ambitions beyond its role in the region – also based on its potential in terms of territory, population, natural resources and so on (Gomes Saraiva 2010, 153; Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 11). This difference and potential is thus strongly rooted in the imaginary of Brazilian elites.¹³⁹

While Brazil shares with Nigeria this sense of ‘exceptionalism’, its connection with a national development and security project instead of a regional one, produces different effects in terms of leadership and regionalisation. In spite of an increasing focus on regional integration as a platform for its global ambitions, the concepts of universalism and autonomy constrain Brazil’s commitment towards the region to the extent that it could endanger its foreign policy goals. For this reason, the Brazilian diplomacy has carefully avoided any reference to leadership in its relations with neighbours. This shifted uneasily with the administration of Lula who turned South

139 Vigevani and Ramanzini Junior (2010) show well that this belief in Brazil’s potential was the foundation of most of intellectual and the elite’s thought on Brazil’s development and international insertion since the 1950s.

American integration into a major axis of his strategy of international insertion.¹⁴⁰

However, official documents and the interviews conducted show the uneasiness of this claim to leadership which should neither scare other South American states, nor constrain Brazil's actions (Gomes Saraiva 2010, 162). Brazilian diplomats and military officers show a range of reactions from hesitant acceptance of the leadership to a clear refusal. A Brazilian diplomat (2012d) for instance, commented that:

‘We do not envisage Brazil to be a leader per se because it wants to show off as a leader. (...) It is only natural that we sometimes take the initiative because we are the biggest country in the region, and if we do not act we cannot just keep waiting for others to do it.’

On the contrary, a Brazilian colonel (2012a) stated that:

‘Because there is a great asymmetry of power in South America and we are not let's say...we are the bigger power thus this responsibility on leading integration, there is no purpose, we don't have this vocation. Thus, also we don't have this capacity to exercise leadership.’

This last emphasis on the limited capacity of Brazil to become a leader in South America, largely shared in governmental, military and diplomatic circles, points to another dimension constraining Brazil's commitment to the region: a representation of the nation as fragile and insecure.¹⁴¹ The quote already cited from the National Defence Strategy (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2008) also testifies to this dimension: ‘The national defence strategy is inseparable from the national development strategy. (...) They reinforce each other. In both, nationality is awakening and the nation is being constructed’. Defence and development are therefore linked to the ‘construction of the nation’ as if it was something still in

¹⁴⁰ Some diplomats stressed the importance of the Brazilian strategy to use dialogues and agreements between Mercosur and Unasur on the one side, and other regions and states of the world, on the other side, in order to promote the diversification of Brazil's external relations (Brazilian diplomat 2012c; Brazilian diplomat 2012e). Brazil is clearly at the origin of this policy of Mercosur and Unasur, which was highlighted when analysing the official regional discourse in chapter five.

¹⁴¹ This echoes the sense of vulnerability of Nigeria. However, this representation is articulated differently in the two countries which leads to opposite results in terms of policy: a clear will of Nigeria to take on the responsibilities of regional leadership, contrasting with Brazil's reluctance to do so.

process, insecure and threatened. The White Book on National Defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 11) also claims that ‘Brazil has developed its own external agenda with more autonomy to define its priorities towards its progress as a nation.’ An explanation of this representation can be found in De Oliveira’s (1994) article that traces it to Brazilian elites’ perpetual quest for the construction of the nation following the perception that the Brazilian nation does not exist or is not satisfying as it is.¹⁴² This idea has been prevalent since the second half of the 19th century and became one of the most constant elements of the Brazilian imaginary. President Kubitschek (1956-71), for example, justified the creation of the new capital Brasilia on the grounds of the un-finishedness of the nation, with the hope that this new capital would construct a new Brazil (De Oliveira 1994, 131). Consequently, if the nation is not even finished and is insecure on its own ground, delegations of sovereignty to regional organisations can only be perceived as dangerous and threatening to the, still to be acquired, autonomy of the nation.

iii. The Sovereignty/Integration tension

Even though regional integration has been cited as a priority in the Brazilian foreign policy agenda since the 1980s, the narrative linking security/defence, development and national independence – in the context of the primacy of the concepts of universalism and autonomy – triggers a constant tension in the dominant Brazilian discourse between ‘sovereignty’/‘autonomy’ and ‘integration’/‘unity’. Former President Lula’s discourses, for instance, while officially promoting regional integration, always limited it to the principles of sovereignty and non-interference:

‘It is important to make clear that we have to start from the assumption that all the integration we want does not give us the right to think that we

¹⁴² To illustrate his argument De Oliveira analyses Brazilian elites and intellectuals’ writings that were influential in four key moments of Brazil’s history: the ‘1870 Generation’ (1870-1940), the ‘Modernismo’ (1911-1930), the ‘Vargas years’ (1931-1945), and the ‘Golden years’ (1946-1960).

can interfere in the sovereignty of Argentina, Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia. No, Sovereignty is a sacred thing that each people conquered.’
(Lula 2009)

This echoes with President Rousseff’s (2011) declaration that the ‘Borders Strategic Plan’ ‘is going to increase [Brazil’s] our sovereignty, is going to broaden fraternal integration with the other countries (...).’ Integration is usually presented in the dominant Brazilian discourse as strengthening the sovereignty of the states involved.¹⁴³ This type of statement linking sovereignty and integration is reiterated throughout all Brazilian documents on political, security and defence cooperation. It shows a tension between ‘sovereignty’ and ‘integration’: the emphasis is on a group of sovereign countries showing ‘good will’ and cooperating to a certain extent; not on the elaboration of a common answer to transnational security threats. Spektor (2010, 33-34) shows well that Brazil’s conceptualization of regionalism is never seen as a project to transcend the limits and problems inherent to a world of sovereign units, but as a tool in reinforcing an order that is strictly pluralist.

This is very explicit in the description of South American defence cooperation by Celso Amorim. He uses recurrently the concept of ‘security community’ – an academic concept originally developed by Karl Deutsch as we saw in the first chapter of this dissertation – to define regional integration in South America:

‘The concept of “security community” seems much more appropriate to describe the reality and, above all, the objectives that we have for South America. (...) It contains the acknowledgement of the sovereign right of other states to autonomy and is supplemented by the proscription of war as a way of resolving disputes between the members of the community.’
(Celso Amorim 2011)

The ‘Security Community’ concept – now integrated in the Brazilian White Book of defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 29) – is used to diffuse the tension

¹⁴³ Significantly, Brazil proposed ‘United we are more Sovereigns’ as the motto for Unasur (South American Community of Nations 2007).

between ‘sovereignty’ and ‘integration’.¹⁴⁴ On the one side, the word ‘community’ refers to the qualitative relation that South American states maintain, united by history and values. On the other side, the concept of ‘pluralistic security community’ designates a community of strictly sovereign states.¹⁴⁵ Amorim uses this concept to emphasise the sovereignty of the states together with their different interests, priorities and capacities, in order to strongly limit binding commitments and the institutionalisation of security and defence cooperation, while at the same time leaving the door open for cooperation when it is perceived as being useful for Brazil. In the same way the White Book on National Defence (Brazilian Ministry of Defence 2012, 34-35) promotes within this South American security community

‘the construction of a South American identity in the area of defence that takes into account the sub-regional and national characteristics (the Platine, Andean, Amazonian, Atlantic, Caribbean and the Pacific dimensions) and that contributes to strengthening the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean.’

High-ranking military officials are careful to specify that the CDS is not a South American NATO and that it strictly respects the sovereignty and national particularities of each member state (Brazilian General 2012a; Brazilian Colonel 2012a; Brazilian General 2012b; Brazilian General 2012c).¹⁴⁶ The intertextual links between the Brazilian discourse and the regional ‘unity in diversity’ discourse analysed in Chapter five show how the former constitutes the later.

However, while the narrative linking security/defence, development and national independence is largely dominant in Brazil, there has been a momentum, between the creation of Mercosur until the Presidency of Lula that started in 2002, when security

¹⁴⁴ Here again an academic concept is used in an official discourse to promote a particular political project for the region.

¹⁴⁵ However, if read properly, Adler and Barnett’ (1998) framework indicates that, when pluralistic security communities reach the ‘mature’ stage, it can lead to important delegations of sovereignty.

¹⁴⁶ See also on this an interview given by former Minister of Defence Jobim at the moment of the creation of the CDS to diffuse the concerns on its role: ‘The Defence Council will not use military action in conflicts’ (O Globo 2008).

and development were occasionally presented in regional terms within Mercosur – thus challenging the dominant discourse. Brazilian officials occasionally depicted Mercosur as a destiny for Brazil instead of an option among others, qualitatively different from South American or Latin American integration (Celso Lafer 2001; Fernando Henrique Cardoso 2001). The context of the 1990s in South America with the democratisation of the Mercosur states, liberal governments in power, the economic crisis and the fear of international marginalisation can help explain the sense of urgency that promoted integration as the guarantor of democracy, peace and prosperity.¹⁴⁷ Former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (2001), for instance, claimed that Mercosur is an element guaranteeing democracy in the region and necessary in the context of globalisation and increased asymmetries. He asked in a speech ‘what would we be today without the Mercosur?’ and added that Mercosur is more than a market; it should be a political union with a vocation to supranationalism. A securitisation move emerged around Mercosur presenting the creation of a community as an end in itself, reflecting the ‘reality’ of complex interdependence and therefore necessary for the future of its member states.

This contesting securitising discourse can still be found in certain groups within the Itamaraty that were opposed to Lula’s foreign policy and that strongly support Mercosur as the core project of integration (Brazilian diplomat 2012f; Brazilian diplomat 2012d; Brazilian diplomat 2012d). A very critical Brazilian diplomat (2012a) commented in this way that: ‘you have to clearly distinguish Unasur from Mercosur. Mercosur is about integration, Unasur is nothing, just dialogue.’ It can also be found in the Brazilian Senate that still largely ignores Unasur. A Brazilian

¹⁴⁷ Saraiva (2010, 156-157) shows that at the turn of the 1990s, the demise of the economic model based on import substitution and the financial problems brought about by the foreign debt crisis led the Brazilian government to redefine its development project.

diplomat (2012g) working for the Senate Committee on External Relations and National Defence acknowledged that:

‘Mercosur is always a topic talked about here, a priority, Unasur less. Mercosur is a priority here, we have a special committee that deals specifically with Mercosur and the representation. So Mercosur has a parliament and we work very close to them (...). Unasur is more an exercise for diplomats and military people, it’s still far from them.’

However, the tension between integration and autonomy was still present even during this momentum, and the sense of urgency later disappeared under Lula’s administration¹⁴⁸ with the promotion of a dilution of Mercosur within Unasur and a re-emphasis on autonomy – in agreement with most of the Itamaraty and military circles who expect a complete merging between Mercosur and Unasur (Brazilian General 2012a; Brazilian Colonel 2012a). It was the Brazilian government who initially asked for the opening of Mercosur to new members and promoted the fusion of Mercosur and the CAN within the South American Community of States (CSN) which later transformed into Unasur (Spektor 2010, 27).

Both this counter discourse and the dominant Brazilian discourse articulating security/defence, development and national independence clearly constitute the two competing regional official discourses of ‘securitisation of integration’ and ‘unity in diversity’ by transferring their concepts and tensions; with the dominant one limiting the possibilities of institutionalisation. Indeed, while it is clear that there is no consensus among South American countries on a unified concept of security/defence

¹⁴⁸ While Fernando Henrique Cardoso is a theoretician of the dependency theory, he believes that development can be attained through free trade and liberalisation building on an institutionalisation of Mercosur as a means to the international insertion of its member states. In his view, Mercosur is needed to face a world of complex interdependences. Conversely, Lula comes from the left-wing Workers Party that has strong nationalistic tendencies and for which development can only come from the achievement of the complete sovereignty and autonomy of Brazil. These two positions reflect the two main school of thought in the Itamaraty since the 1990s: the pragmatic institutionalists and the autonomists who hold different views about the dynamics of the international order, national interest and the best strategy for attaining the overall goals of autonomy and economic growth for the country (Gomes Saraiva 2010, 15).

or integration, there have been many attempts by other member states to promote further institutionalisation that have been consistently blocked by Brazil (Marques 2003, 79; Spektor 2010, 27). Peru, Chile and Argentina have, for instance, promoted a model of institutionalised regional security cooperation¹⁴⁹ in Mercosur and/or Unasur. Recently, Peru proposed a ‘Protocol on Peace, Security and Cooperation in Unasur’ including mentions to the ‘new threats’ and ‘regional solidarity’; while Chile proposed a ‘Unasur Security Architecture’ (Unasur Delegates Council 2009). As for Colombia, its government is a partisan of a unified concept of security and defence including the participation of the armed forces in the fight against drug trafficking. Even Venezuela proposed to create the CDS as a South American NATO which triggered Brazil’s strong reaction against this possibility (ZEROHORA.com 2008).

Hence, the tension between the concepts of nation and region in the Brazilian discourse, with the region seen as supporting the nation to some extent, but also as potentially threatening its autonomy and independence largely constrain the possibilities of foreign and security policies regionalisation.

II. The ‘external’ actors’ discourses

This section examines the discourse and role of international actors in West Africa and South America. In West Africa, the role of the EU seems predominant through its policy of supporting and framing ECOWAS on the model of its own identity and norms. In South America, the EU together with the US – acting also through the OAS – try to promote their own meaning and definition of security and cooperation.

¹⁴⁹ This model is a central idea of the Argentinian and Chilean White books on defence.

1. In West Africa

When looking at the role of international actors in West Africa, one has to notice first the importance of the involvement of the international community through its development and humanitarian assistance, capacity building of national and regional institutions, military operations or assistance, and so on. The actors on the ground range from the UN and its agencies (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), etc.), the European Union (EU), to bilateral donors such as the US, the UK, France, Japan and, increasingly, China. Concerning ECOWAS, I argue that the EU is the most influential actor, promoting the regionalisation process as well as constituting it through a transfer of its norms and values on the model of its own identity. It performs ECOWAS as a regional security actor – together with West African actors, in particular Nigeria – through its discourses and practices.

This argument builds on the fact that, while other international actors indifferently target West African states or ECOWAS depending on their interests,¹⁵⁰ the EU is the only international actor which has been consistently, and since the beginning of the ECOWAS' peace and security architecture, supporting the political and security dimensions of ECOWAS.¹⁵¹ The EU shares with most of the international community present in West Africa its values and norms such as democracy, the protection of human rights, good governance, conflict prevention, etc.; and indeed, West African actors are also socialised to these values through their interactions with other international actors.¹⁵² Nevertheless, the EU is the main interlocutor of ECOWAS

¹⁵⁰ This was confirmed also in my interviews with diplomats and military officers from other important international actors present in West Africa (US official 2013; French military officer 2013).

¹⁵¹ Regional integration was already promoted since the 70s with the Lomé I Conventions between the European Community (EC) and Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP).

¹⁵² UN agencies are probably the most active actors promoting these values and norms together with the EU. However, on the one hand, while the UNODC or the UNOWA occasionally support

through its institutionalised political dialogue as well as the main development donor. Both EU and ECOWAS officials consensually commented in interviews that the EU was the main partner of ECOWAS in the field of peace and security (European Commission official 2011a; EEAS official 2013c; EEAS official 2013d; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013b). Dr Ibn Chambas (2011), former President of the ECOWAS Commission contrasted this close partnership to that with the UN aiming to provide the ‘umbrella’ or ‘legitimacy’. The EU also has special access to ECOWAS as a ‘sister organisation’ that can bring expertise and resources to foster regionalisation¹⁵³ – and this without the negative feelings towards former colonial states.

This part examines first the EU’s discourse on regions and security. It then looks at the discourses of the EU towards ECOWAS, Nigeria and security. Finally, it presents the main instruments of the EU’s actions towards ECOWAS and their chronology in relation to the development of the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture.

i. The EU’s discourse on regions and security

The EU’s engagement as a global security actor takes two main paths: a promotion of regional integration, and a focus on conflict prevention. They can only be understood in the context of the EU’s historical construction and its self-representation through the meaning it gives to regions and security.¹⁵⁴ The transformation of a conflict-prone

ECOWAS, they do not promote regional integration as such and often target a smaller group of states (see UNODC 2013). On the other hand, it is important to note that they only play the role of implementing agencies supporting ECOWAS’ plans. Even more, ECOWAS is regularly competing with them to get the money directly from donors such as the EU, instead of having a UN agency as an intermediate (European Commission official 2013a).

¹⁵³ EU officials constantly present ECOWAS as the mirror of the EU with the same rational and *raison d’être*. The EU is thus the ‘natural’ partner of ECOWAS (European Commission officials 2011; EEAS official 2013c).

¹⁵⁴ Ian Manners (2002; 2006) makes the argument that the EU is predisposed to act in a normative way because of its particular features: its historical construction, its characteristics as a hybrid polity, and its

Europe into a peaceful and prosperous area where war does not appear to be a possible solution anymore resulted in the EU's focus on conflict prevention – aiming at structural stability and at addressing the root causes of conflict.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, the EU assimilates the European project to a long-term conflict prevention and peacebuilding project: 'The EU itself an on-going exercise in making peace and prosperity, has a big role to play in global efforts for conflict prevention (European Commission 2001);' or 'The European Union is a successful example of conflict prevention, based on democratic values and respect for human rights, justice and solidarity, economic prosperity and sustainable development' (EU 2001).

Regional integration, developed on the basis of these values is presented as the means that enabled this peace and prosperity. It then became one of the major dimensions of the EU's conflict prevention approach. Waever (1996) convincingly argues that in Europe, security, integration and identity have been tied together in a specific narrative: integration has been given a security quality and has become a matter of survival for Europe, a necessity for its peace and stability with the aim of preventing a return to past wars and to avoid fragmentation. This securitisation of regional integration constitutes Europe's identity and articulates regions and security as inseparable. The result is that integration as an imperative for peace and security is understood by the EU in the same way in other regions of the world, following the logic that if it has been good – even necessary – for Europe, it should also be good for others (European Commission official 2011a; European Commission official 2011c;

constitutional norms embodying the principles of democracy, rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights. The argument here is similar even though I do not share the assumption that acting normatively for the EU means at some point acting against its own interest. A conceptualisation of interests and norms as discursively constructed enables avoiding this divide and consider them as deeply intertwined (Diez 2013, 202).

¹⁵⁵ See, for instance, the Check-list for Root Causes of Conflict (European Commission 2008).

EEAS Official 2014a). This representation appears very clearly in this comment of a Commission official summarising the EU's support for regional integration:

‘when the EU started developing its programs (...) the first thing we came up with was that there has to be regional cooperation because it's the way we do things...you create like in the bible, you take a rib out of yourself and you create another human being. We are based on regional cooperation so they must be as well (...)’ (European Commission officials 2011).

This articulation between regional integration, peace and stability is reinforced by the representation that security issues are nowadays transnational in nature, and therefore cannot be addressed efficiently by individual states (European Commission official 2011a). A high level EEAS official (2011b) affirms in this way that: ‘the regional scale is key for security issues; there is neither national solution nor international one. The more efficient is the regional.’¹⁵⁶ Thus, the adequate answer would be to adopt a regional approach to peace and security – a solution that the EU recommends in all its thematic documents on security issues¹⁵⁷ as well as in the European Security Strategy (EU 2003).

Regional approaches to security issues are thus characterised by a focus on conflict prevention (following the EU's self representation) – looking at the root causes of conflicts and at the security and development nexus.¹⁵⁸ The Conclusions on Security and Development (European Council 2007) state that ‘there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and that without development

¹⁵⁶ This discourse shows close intertextual links with the Regional Security Complexes literature which, as we saw, is used both to promote regionalisation (in West Africa) and to limit it (in South America).

¹⁵⁷ See, amongst others, the Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (EU 2006); the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (EU 2001); the Communication on Developing a strategic concept on tackling organised crime (European Commission 2005).

¹⁵⁸ For further discussions on the security and development nexus in the EU see, for instance, Bueger and Vennesson (2009).

and poverty eradication there will be no sustainable peace.’¹⁵⁹ Consequently, the EU discourse prescribes the development of a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention. It points to the ‘renewed impetus to preventive action’ which will be done by:

‘forging comprehensive approaches to preventing conflicts, by better integrating conflict prevention and key cross cutting issues, particularly human rights, gender, protection of civilians, children and armed conflicts and responsibility to protect in all areas of short and long term external action.’ (European Council 2011)¹⁶⁰

Hence regional integration, conflict prevention,¹⁶¹ security and development and the idea of a comprehensive approach are closely linked in the EU discourse as mentioned in the Conclusions on Security and Development (European Council 2007):

‘The complementarity between EU security and development priorities is supported by the necessary interaction with other policy areas like governance or regional integration, all acting in a mutually reinforcing way.’

The analysis of this core EU discourse on regional integration and security shows the EU’s rationale and the normative content of its engagement with ECOWAS: promoting regional integration on the basis of its core values (democracy, good governance, respect for human rights, etc.) and emphasising the comprehensive dimension as the answer to security issues.

¹⁵⁹ See also: the European Security Strategy (EU 2003); the Strategy for Africa: Towards a Euro-African pact to accelerate Africa’s development (EU 2005).

¹⁶⁰ The Communication on the European Union and the issue of conflict in Africa: Peace-Building, Conflict Prevention and Beyond (European Commission 1996) already promoted conflict prevention and a comprehensive approach. More recently, see also, an EU response to situations of fragility – engaging in difficult environments for sustainable development, stability and peace (EU 2007).

¹⁶¹ Wouters and Naert (2003) show that this focus on conflict prevention as well as on a comprehensive security concept including security and development was a common shift in the international community since the 1990s shared by actors such as the EU, the UN, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It is thus difficult to point exactly to who initiated this shift. However, the EU has been one of the key actors of this development and one of the first who put forward the concept of ‘structural conflict prevention’.

At the moment, the EU's engagement with ECOWAS is probably the strongest amongst its interregional relations. Indeed, beyond the shared colonial history¹⁶² and the opportunity to further its influence as a foreign policy actor,¹⁶³ West Africa represents in the EU discourse the highest level of threat for its own security and stability: drug trafficking networks ending in Europe, terrorism with the kidnapping of EU citizens, illegal migration, etc. The European Security Strategy (EU 2003) illustratively depicts a vulnerable Europe endangered by unstable parts of the world such as West Africa. The answer is thus the replication of the European experience, which would provide for economic development, democratic stability and a peaceful world (European Commission 2001).

ii. The EU's discourse towards ECOWAS and Nigeria

While we will explore specific EU practices constituting ECOWAS in the last chapter of this dissertation, we shall first introduce the specific discourses that enable these practices and that perform ECOWAS as a regional security actor with Nigeria as its driving force. The EU addresses two main types of discourse to ECOWAS. The first one is centred on ownership, partnership and joint responsibility. The joint declarations following the EU-ECOWAS ministerial meetings where both parties 'agree' together on priorities, have an 'exchange of views', and discuss the peace and security situation of West Africa (ECOWAS-EU 2003; ECOWAS-EU 2005; ECOWAS-EU 2013), as well as documents such as the ECOWAS-EU (2007), provide an image of partnership between the two organisations. It is also central in

¹⁶² Some EU member states, in particular France and the UK, kept close economic and political relations with their former colonies in West Africa. These close links and shared history between Europe and West Africa enable the EU to exert a particular influence in the region.

¹⁶³ Africa is becoming increasingly important for the EU on a foreign and security policy level, as an important element of the EU's ambition to develop a 'global foreign policy presence' (Keukeleire and Macnaughtan 2008, 216). Moreover, the view that the EU would benefit from a multilateral world based on integrated regions is also prominent. In such a world the EU expects to have a central position by its very nature, providing it with (a still challenged) legitimacy as a foreign and security policy actor. It thus considers in its interest to foster the agency of other regional organisations.

every agreement and official document on EU-Africa and EU-ECOWAS relations. ECOWAS should have ownership of the EU's development programs and should be an equal partner with the EU (ACP-EC 2000; EC-West Africa 2008). At the same time, African regional organisations are also given 'the primary responsibility for prevention, management and resolution of conflicts on the African continent' (European Council 2005). The EU stresses, for instance, that organisations such as ECOWAS 'represent the first level for dealing with tensions which are mostly of a regional nature and for finding solutions between all the forces directly involved' (EU 2000).

This discourse is reinforced by a second one aiming at giving legitimacy to ECOWAS and recognising it as the key security actor in West Africa.¹⁶⁴ This discourse becomes evident in the declarations following the EU-ECOWAS Ministerial meetings, where the EU 'encourages,' 'supports,' 'welcomes,' 'congratulates' ECOWAS integration and actions in the fields of peace and security. Already in 2001, the EU 'welcomes the progress made by ECOWAS in setting up a mechanism for crisis prevention and management and conflict settlement and will continue to support ECOWAS efforts in this connection' (ECOWAS-EU 2001). Since the crises in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s, the EU started mentioning quasi-systematically ECOWAS in Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) statements concerning West Africa (Nivet 2006, 19). These official documents constantly state that regional integration is the adequate response for conflict prevention and resolution in West Africa, and that security issues – mainly transnational – can only be addressed regionally, and in a comprehensive and integrated manner that only ECOWAS can achieve. The EU states its objective as

¹⁶⁴ This discourse is very particular to the EU as the only actor, among the international actors present in West Africa, who consistently promotes regional integration as the solution to peace and security.

promoting ‘regional approaches to West African transnational problems’ because ‘The EU is well aware that national solutions alone are not sufficient to address security threats in West Africa due to the cross-border nature of the problems (...)’ (EU 2006). In a joint communiqué the EU and ECOWAS call for the ECOWAS member states ‘to step up their engagement and cooperation under a comprehensive approach led by the region itself’ (ECOWAS-EU 2013).¹⁶⁵ At the same time, these documents always remind ECOWAS and its member states of the urgency to address these security issues in a comprehensive way as it is the condition for their development: ‘Peace and security are directly connected to sustainable development’ (ECOWAS-EU 2008).¹⁶⁶ Hence, the EU discourse towards West Africa reiterates consistently its narrative linking regional integration, security and development, together with the promotion of ECOWAS’ agency. Doing so, the EU clearly participates in constituting the ECOWAS ‘securitisation of community’ discourse which intertextually draws on EU concepts.

In parallel, the EU also constitutes Nigeria as the core of the region. EU officials constantly refer to Nigeria as the indisputable leader of West Africa, the guarantor of its stability and the driving force of ECOWAS, in particular of its peace and security dimension (European Commission official 2011; EEAS official 2013a; EEAS official 2013c). This is asserted in the joint communiqués of the EU-Nigeria political dialogue:

‘This [ECOWAS’s conflict prevention, mediation and peace keeping policies] will enable ECOWAS, with the support of its Member States and in particular Nigeria’s assistance, inter alia to react to regional crisis, consolidate democracies in the region and provide support for post conflict reconstruction and development’ (Nigeria-EU 2008).

¹⁶⁵ For other official documents promoting conflict prevention and resolution through a regional comprehensive or integrated approach see: 16th Political Dialogue at Ministerial Level (EU-ECOWAS 2013); the Statement to the UNSC (EU 2005); etc.

¹⁶⁶ See also the Presidency Statement to the UNSC (EU 2005).

Through this political dialogue the EU constantly encourages Nigeria to take a greater role in ECOWAS (EEAS official 2013a; EEAS official 2013c; Nigeria-EU 2012). It supports its commitment to West African regional integration as the solution to the problems of the region: another communiqué (Nigeria-EU 2012) states that ‘They expressed their conviction that further progress in the integration of West Africa will result in increased Peace and Security, Democracy, Good Governance, Stability and Prosperity in the area.’ Doing so, the EU presents Nigeria as its main partner in the region: they both are the most important actors in West Africa who have the responsibility to support ECOWAS in dealing with West Africa’s security environment. However, EU officials also emphasise that this role should unfold within – and be limited by – ECOWAS’ institutions. As a European Commission official (2011a) puts it: ‘We want a strong, committed Nigeria, with a responsibility proportional to its importance in the institutions’; while the Joint Way Forwards (Nigeria-EU 2009) also reminds that ‘The EU fully supports Nigeria’s commitment to working with ECOWAS’.

Hence, the discourse of the EU towards West Africa is twofold: it provides legitimacy and agency to ECOWAS on the basis of its efficiency at tackling security issues which are by nature regional and need a comprehensive response; and it constitutes Nigeria as the regional leader within ECOWAS who has the responsibility to drive the regionalisation process.

iii. The EU’s instruments: framing ECOWAS’ peace and security architecture

The EU’s discourses described in the first two subparts constitute particular practices that the EU uses to frame ECOWAS’ peace and security architecture. The last chapter of this dissertation is dedicated to case studies demonstrating how these discourses

and practices of the EU, together with those of West African actors, in particular Nigeria, constitute ECOWAS. In the meantime, this last subpart concerns more generally the instruments used by the EU in West Africa as well as the chronology of their use in relation to the development of ECOWAS.

The EU's practices towards ECOWAS rely on a wide array of instruments that target every dimension of ECOWAS' peace and security architecture: development and cooperation assistance, political dialogue – both planned for in the Cotonou Agreement¹⁶⁷ defining the relations of the EU with Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) – and external action instruments. Development cooperation with ACP countries started already with the Yaoundé Convention (EEC-African and Malagasy States 1963). The aim was to allow them to maintain preferential access to the European Economic Community (EEC) market as well as to receive aid. Yaoundé was then replaced by a succession of four Lomé Conventions which broadened the scope of cooperation. Lomé I (ACP-EEC 1975) already supported regional cooperation among ACP countries even though it was restricted to the economic level. The Lomé IV Convention (ACP-EC 1990) went one step further by giving it 'high priority' and included drug trafficking – for the first time a non-economic area of action. The EC example, the links with the EC member states, as well as these agreements' support for regional grouping and cooperation played an important role in the creation of ECOWAS (Dr Ibn Chambas 2011; Sanu and Onwuka 1997, 127-128).

Today, in terms of development assistance (under Cotonou), the support to ECOWAS' capabilities in the field of peace and security became significant with the

¹⁶⁷ The Cotonou agreement was signed in 2000 and entered into force in 2003. It is based on three pillars: political dialogue, trade, and economic cooperation.

9th European Development Fund (EDF)¹⁶⁸ 2002-2007 (European Commission officials 2011; RIP 2002-2007) even though it started already with the 8th EDF (1995-2000).¹⁶⁹ A quantitative leap happened with the 10th EDF (2008-2013) that allocated 119 million euros to peace and security in support of three main initiatives: the fight against drug trafficking, migration, and conflict prevention (EC-West Africa 2008).

An important feature of the Cotonou Agreement is that it introduced an emphasis on political norms and values with ‘essential elements’ (respect for human rights, democratic principles, rule of law) a violation of which would lead to the suspension of cooperation. This was a turning point in the EU-ECOWAS relationship – and more generally EU-ACP – that became increasingly political and conditional (Keukeleire and Macnaughtan 2008, 290-291). It also initiated a political dialogue to discuss these norms and values, as well as other political topics such as the arms trade, organised crime, migration, peace and security.¹⁷⁰ The dialogue between ECOWAS and the EU already started in 1998 at the level of high-ranking officials, which testifies to the importance of ECOWAS for the EU. Ministerial meetings started twice a year after the signature of Cotonou in 2000. They were further supported by meetings between the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS (now the ECOWAS Commission) and the EU Heads of Mission in Abuja, as well as by meetings at expert level, etc. (Nivet 2006, 20). Contact is thus constant and taking place at all levels.

The temporality of these instruments further contextualises these relations between ECOWAS and the EU. On the one hand, ECOWAS was created in 1975 and intervened militarily in Liberia and Sierra Leone already in the early 1990s. However,

¹⁶⁸ The EDF is the financial instrument providing development assistance to ACP countries.

¹⁶⁹ In the EC-West Africa (2002) Regional Strategy Paper and Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) 2002-2007, 10 million euros were allocated to two programs supporting ECOWAS’ capacities in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. The RIPs are part of the operationalisation of the EDF.

¹⁷⁰ The political dialogue was strengthened after the revision of Cotonou in 2005. It became more formalised, and the resort to art. 96 (that may lead to the non-execution of the agreement in case of a country breaching the ‘essential elements’) became stricter.

these interventions were conducted by an *ad hoc* brigade, ECOMOG, led by Nigeria. There was neither peace and security architecture nor normative framework driving regional strategies or interventions. The first step towards the peace and security architecture was the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention Management Resolution Peacekeeping and Security in 1999, followed by the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in 2001, and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) in 2008. On the other hand, as just mentioned, the dialogue with the EU started in 1998 before the drafting of the Mechanism, while the Cotonou agreement introducing political conditionality was signed in 2000, shortly followed by the ECOWAS Protocol on Good Governance. The EDF assistance was strengthened in 2002 before the drafting of most of ECOWAS regional plans and strategies as well as the ECPF. The argument here, therefore, is that the EU was crucial in constituting this architecture and performing ECOWAS as a regional security actor on the model of its own identity and norms. The following comment made by Dr Ibn Chambas (2011) in an interview supports well this claim. Dr Ibn Chambas was ECOWAS Executive Secretary from 2002 and became in 2007 for four years the first President of the ECOWAS Commission; he has been one of the main drivers of ECOWAS institutional and normative developments:

‘it is very evident, but what has happened with the EU, with the integration process, you know with the development of the EU has been a major inspiration, (...) you know people sit back and see that countries which have been at war with each other and committed atrocities that anyone cannot even imagine in Africa are now working together in a real sense, and the impact is that they are citizens, it makes a stronger argument for integration than any text book that you can read. So I used to cite it, I used to give it as an example (...). (...) in many of the thing we are grappling with, Europe has done it already so we don’t need to reinvent the wheel, (...).’

The examples in the last chapter will further support this argument.

2. In South America

The South American case is more complex due to the role of different actors promoting a regional project contrasting with the Brazilian project. We will see first the EU discourse towards the region before examining the US/OAS discourses.

i. The EU's discourse on Latin American integration and security

The EU's discourse on regions and security has already been outlined in the part on West Africa. It applies as well in the case of South America – and Latin America in general – where the EU promotes regional integration as the best guarantee of regional stability, democracy and development (Dudek 2013, 202). It is telling that while the EU actively tries to shape the sub-continent regional organisations on the basis of its own norms and concepts in the same way than for West Africa – with, for instance, the EU-Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries dialogue¹⁷¹, its relations with Mercosur, conversely, show a complete lack of engagement with the topic of regional security. The EU-LAC relations – that include South American states – are beyond the scope of this research but they serve as a good point of comparison on what the EU is trying to achieve in the sub-continent and the limits it reaches with Mercosur.

The EU has maintained a political dialogue with the LAC countries since 1999 in the framework of a strategic partnership. Since the first meeting one of the major topics on the agenda has been the promotion of economic and political regional integration in the region (EU-LAC 1999). More specifically, in the field of security, the EU established with the LAC countries a Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs since 1995. The discourse produced by the joint documents

¹⁷¹ Recently this dialogue took a more structured form with the EU-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) strategic partnership. The CELAC was launched as a forum for political dialogue and cooperation in 2010 by the LAC countries.

resulting from this partnership strongly resemble those analysed in the case of EU-ECOWAS relations. The stress is on interconnected transnational security issues such as drug trafficking, organised crime, and terrorism that have the potential to destabilise the region. The documents thus highlight the need for a comprehensive approach requiring cooperation between the countries and, when possible, a regional approach (EU-LAC 2002).¹⁷² The interregional relations of the EU with the Community of Andean Nations (CAN), the Central American States, and the Caribbean States are also marked by support for regional security cooperation structures and/or common security policies (EC-Andean Community 2007; EU-CELAC 2013).

Hence, the argument made here does not seek to show the efficiency of the EU cooperation in the sub-continent – which is rather limited – but illustrates that, when it has the opportunity to do so, the EU will promote its discourse on regional integration and security. What is striking as we will see now is that this discourse is absent from EU-Mercosur relations, even though the EU has sought to promote the Mercosur integration process since its inception and has a security interest in the sub-region to the extent that the Southern Cone is a major transit region for drug trafficking between Latin America and Europe.

ii. The EU and regional integration in South America: model or counter-model?

EU-Mercosur relations started just after the creation of Mercosur.¹⁷³ It has actually been argued that the EU was the model and the incentive that triggered this regional integration initiative in the Southern Cone. Lenz (2012,160-161) shows, for instance,

¹⁷² See also the Declaration of Vienna (EU-LAC 2006), the Madrid Declaration (EU-LAC 2010) and the Brussels Declaration (EU-CELAC 2012).

¹⁷³ This part will be exclusively dedicated to Mercosur. Unasur is still a recent organisation that has not developed relations with the EU.

that in the context of the economic crisis and the US announcement of its intention to liberalise hemispheric trade, Brazil and Argentina could have easily followed this agenda, but instead decided to start a ‘community-building process’ on the model of the EC. Doing so, they used clear EC terminology and objectives and delineated a list of common policies to be coordinated similar to the Single European Act adopted a few years earlier. Brazilian diplomats confirmed this during the interviews. A Brazilian diplomat (2012a) who was involved in the launching of Mercosur explained that:

‘Mercosur was conceived by diplomats who wanted to do European integration. Mercosur became the priority of Brazil foreign policy when Fernando Henrique Cardoso was the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We were going to build a kind of mini European Community in the Southern Cone.’

The creation of Mercosur in 1991 was immediately followed by an Inter-institutional Agreement in 1992 that enabled the EU to provide technical and institutional support for the establishment of Mercosur’s institutions. In 1995 an Interregional Framework Agreement was signed, through which the EU supported Mercosur’s main institutional innovations such as the transformation of the Mercosur Secretariat into a technical office, and the Mercosur Joint Parliamentary Committee (CPC), followed by the creation of the Mercosur Parliament (EC-Mercosur 2007; Lenz 2012, 162). Hence, the EU has not only been the model for the creation of Mercosur but also the largest donor to Mercosur¹⁷⁴ and the only international actor promoting its regional integration process.

A process of regionalisation and assimilation of European norms could therefore be expected such as in the case of West Africa. However, the exact opposite

¹⁷⁴ In the framework of the Regional Strategy Paper 2007-2013 (EC-Mercosur 2007), the EU provided 40 million euros to Mercosur with 10% allocated to support Mercosur institutionalisation, and 70% for the deepening of Mercosur and the implementation of the future EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

happened. The Brazilian discourse analysed earlier is significant in order to understand the constraints on the regionalisation process. Some caveats were already introduced in the Interregional Framework Agreement (EC-Mercosur 1995) such as ‘both the Community and Mercosur have specific experience of regional integration’; or cooperation activities aiming at the Mercosur integration process ‘shall be considered in the context of specific requests of Mercosur.’ Moreover, political and security issues are absent from the possible fields of cooperation except for a quick reference to drug trafficking.¹⁷⁵ The joint declarations following the political dialogue established by the agreement also reflect the form and extent of this dialogue: brief declarations with few mentions to regional integration and no discussion on South American political and security issues as in the case of the EU-ECOWAS political dialogue (Mercosur-EU 2009).¹⁷⁶ Finally, the Association Agreement, under negotiation between the EU and Mercosur since 2000, has still not been concluded.¹⁷⁷ This shows a very cautious approach from Mercosur countries towards an EU eager to promote its institutional and normative model.

While these constraints frame EU-Mercosur relations, the EU – using the instruments it has left – still tries to promote the regional integration process. One of the main objectives reiterated in all EU documents is to reinforce Mercosur’s institutional structure. The Regional Strategy Paper 2007-2013 (EC-Mercosur 2007) states that: ‘The objective of European cooperation would be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Mercosur institutions, allowing them to fully contribute to the decision-making process.’ It also strives to:

¹⁷⁵ Thus the cooperation does not concern the field of foreign and security policy. This cooperation is made through the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) which is the equivalent of the EDF for Latin America, Asia and Central Asia, the Gulf region and South Africa.

¹⁷⁶ See also Ministerial Meeting (EU-Mercosur 2005); Ministerial Meeting (Mercosur-EU 2013).

¹⁷⁷ Negotiations for this Association Agreement started in 2000 but they were blocked in 2004 after an important dissent on the trade dimension. They were re-launched in 2010 and are still slowly on going.

‘improve the Mercosur integration process and regional cohesion by reinforcing the role of the Mercosur Secretariat, its institutional capacity and organisation structure; (...); To strengthen the Secretariat’s operation and managerial capabilities in order to transform it in an effective executive body capable of handling new tasks and responsibilities (...).’

The bet of the EU here is that by promoting the development of a permanent bureaucracy on the model of the European Commission, it could re-open the path towards deeper integration. The aim is to give agency to the regional organisation – such as in the case of ECOWAS – which does not exist at the moment. However, as highlighted by an EEAS official (2014a), because of Mercosur’s insufficient responsiveness and institutional developments, the EU is starting to doubt the usefulness of its support and has decided to cut cooperation in future financial frameworks.

The EU’s relations with Brazil are characteristic of these constraints to the promotion of regional integration. While the Strategic partnership concluded with Brazil in 2007 aimed to re-engage the country after the deadlock of the negotiations for the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, the political dialogue, within its frame, shows little interest in regional issues. In the political and security fields the dialogue mostly addresses global peace and security challenges that should be addressed ‘bilaterally or in international and multilateral context’ (EU-Brazil 2011).¹⁷⁸ An EEAS official (2014a) pointed to Brazil’s reluctance to engage with issues in its own region. Another EEAS official (2014b) emphasised Brazil’s lack of transparency on its objectives towards the region. Moreover, Brazil is constantly presented as a global partner but never referred to as a regional partner or leader (which is the case for Nigeria), due, according to the EEAS official (2014b), to Brazil’s refusal to act as a regional power.

¹⁷⁸ See also the EU-Brazil (2007) Summit, the Fourth EU-Brazil (2010) Summit, and the Seventh EU-Brazil (2014) Summit.

This tension in EU-Brazil relations, with the EU, on the one hand, promoting regional integration, and Brazil, on the other hand, resisting any meaningful institutionalisation in spite of having originally taken the EU as a model for Mercosur, is also noticeable in Brazilian diplomats' discourse. Whereas some still assert the prevalence of the EU model: 'The dream of all integration projects is to become like the EU' (Brazilian diplomat 2012e), or 'the EU is the model that we are going after' (Brazilian diplomat 2012g); the dominant discourse refutes the idea of the EU as a possible model. A Brazilian diplomat (2012f), for instance, insisted that the Mercosur administration is not a player, it is instead 'far from the European Commission in Brussels, nothing like that. Because we don't want to have this kind of bureaucracy to keep it closer to the decisions of the countries.'¹⁷⁹ This shows the resistance to what the EU is trying to promote: a permanent bureaucracy with a degree of agency and which could take some initiative to foster regionalisation. In this way, most of the diplomats acknowledge that the EU has been an inspiration but stress that its model is not adapted to the realities of South America, Brazil being so big that it would have no reason to accept initiatives and decisions from regional institutions or other member states (Brazilian diplomat 2012b; Brazilian diplomat 2012e).

Interestingly enough though, whether they consider the EU as a positive model or not, all the diplomats interviewed defined the Mercosur regional integration process in reference to the EU.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, what is significant here is that the EU has played a major role in launching Mercosur and partly constitutes the 'securitisation of

¹⁷⁹ The Brazilian diplomat (2012f) emphasised his statement with a revealing anecdote on an encounter he witnessed between the EU Commissioner for Trade and the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs: the former began the meeting by asking why Mercosur did not create something similar to the European Commission; to which the latter responded that this was not adapted to Brazil who did not want to limit its capacity to influence the process.

¹⁸⁰ It is noteworthy to say that I did not have to ask the question for them to compare Mercosur to the EU.

integration' discourse that was analysed in chapter five: the EU model provided a solution to the deadlock situation in which Mercosur countries considered they were at this moment, between the economic crisis and US predominance. Buzan and Waever (2003, 325-327) argue that, on the model of Europe, Mercosur carries the same strategic sense that 'regional institutions must not be threatened because they are the key to a future that is more desirable in several profound respects than the past.' The EU thus plays an important role in the imaginary of the region; it also continues to promote its discourse through the last element that will be analysed here, the European Parliament.

The role of the European Parliament, which seeks to socialise Latin American representatives – including members of Parlasur¹⁸¹ – to its discourse through the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, is important. The dialogue taking place in the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights and the documents produced are of particular interest to us here. Regional security is one of the main topics of this Committee, the mission of which is to further regional cooperation. It promotes a comprehensive view of security and tries to create a sense of urgency:

'whereas offences linked to drug trafficking and organised crime are a major public order problem in the world, with the potential to destabilise government institutions and even some states, (...); whereas this is causing hitherto unknown level of violence with tens of thousands of lives lost each year (...), spoiling projects that could help create jobs and prosperity (...);'(Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly 2013)

Showing the scale and interconnections of these security issues:

'Whereas murder, firearms, people trafficking, corruption and the drug trade are all interlinked because drug finance the arms purchase that fuel the warfare between criminal organisations and gangs fighting for control of territory and trafficking, and sometimes subsidise the activities of terrorist organisations.'

¹⁸¹ The assistance provided by the EU to Mercosur through the DCI also includes support to strengthen the Mercosur Parliament: transfer its know-how, prepare for direct elections, etc. (EC-Mercosur 2007). This is another path used by the EU to promote the institutionalisation and deepening of Mercosur.

The necessary response is thus a regional approach and strategies as ‘no country can solve it by adopting exclusively national or isolationist policies’ (Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly 2013). We are thus back here to the EU discourse on regions and security. What is noticeable also is that the documents of this Committee go as far as blaming regional organisations in Latin America for their lack of action, noting that ‘rather than being articulated at biregional or inter-regional level, EU-LAC cooperation in the field of security and defence has come to take the form of bilateral activities’; and make a special mention to ‘EU-Mercosur cooperation in the field of security and defence’ which barely exists (Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly 2011).

Interestingly, South American Ministers come to the Committee to speak about these issues. The Uruguayan Minister of the Interior presented the situation in his country by highlighting the link between criminal and drug trafficking, and asserting the need for joint actions (Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly 2011b). The Ecuadorian Minister responsible for coordinating internal and external security came preaching for the ‘Creation of an innovative regional policy in the field of defence’ including drug trafficking and organised crime (Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly 2010). They therefore come to the EU Parliament to discuss regional security issues in a way that is not allowed within South American forums.¹⁸² This Committee is a ‘Trojan horse’ for Brazil. Indeed, it has a decisive influence on Parlasur’s discourse which strongly draws on this Committee’s documents and concepts, but also on the Brazilian Senate which still sends its members to Parlasur – as was shown in the beginning of this chapter and in chapter five. Some initiatives,

¹⁸² Andy Klom who was the Brazil Desk Officer of the European Commission, emphasises in an article that ‘The smaller countries, Uruguay and Paraguay, incline towards a stronger degree of supranational governance, but Brazil as a “big country” does not accept this’ (Klom 2003, 352).

such as the proposal to create a 'Public Security Programme in Mercosur' on the model of Europol, is thus a direct consequence of this encounter (Parliament of the Mercosur 2008).

Hence, this interaction with the EU as actively promoting regional integration, or just taken as a (counter-) model, contributes to explain the tension in the dominant 'unity in diversity' regional discourse. The EU was chosen as the model of integration and 'community-building' legitimising Mercosur since its origin: the concepts of integration and community are thus deeply rooted in the EU's experience even though they clash with the predominant Brazilian aim of maintaining a coexistence between states without losing any degree of sovereignty. This is less present in Unasur since this project explicitly offers an alternative model. However, the EU model still provides the umbrella legitimising the regional integration process and therefore stays on the horizon as the main standard for regionalisation. Moreover, the EU continues promoting, and contributes to (re)producing, the 'securitisation of integration' contesting discourse within Mercosur, and will probably try to do so with Unasur when relations are officially established.

iii. The Organisation of American States (OAS): the US 'Trojan horse'

Next to the EU, which is the main actor promoting regional integration in South America, the US is the inescapable actor in the continent seeking to frame the security policy of South American states and promoting cooperation with and between them. In spite of having different objectives and means, both international actors converge in promoting a comprehensive concept of security based on the securitisation of transnational threats and requiring joint cooperative actions. This testifies to the existence of an international community discourse shared by the major international actors and giving meaning to concepts such as 'security'. The US does

so mainly in two ways: through its interactions with South American states within the OAS, and through its military assistance to the region.

It is important to have an overview of US foreign policy in the sub-continent in order to understand the context. In the 1980s, even before the end of the Cold War, the main focus of US foreign policy in the region already shifted from anti-communism and support to the military regimes, to a 'war on drugs' – complemented and partly merged, after 11 September 2001 (9/11), with the 'war on terrorism' (Pion Berlin, 2005, 221-222; Feitosa and Pinheiro 2012, 67). The US conceptualised drug trafficking as a major threat to its national security and connected it to the existence of terrorist groups in South America (Duarte Villa and Trindade Viana 2010, 108-109). The Partnership for the Americas (USSOUTHCOM¹⁸³ 2008) states, for instance, that:

'The drug traffickers of yesterday have become much more lethal today, and this trend is expected to continue. Narco-terrorists derive their funding and power from the sale of illicit drugs and have evolved into groups in Colombia including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, and the National Liberation Army, or ELN. These organizations have driven up the rates of homicide and kidnappings throughout the region. These groups and a number of extremely violent gangs do not operate within traditional nation-state boundaries. They live among, terrorize the populace, and take advantage of ungoverned and under-governed spaces across the hemisphere.'

The US response was to provide massive military assistance to Latin American states in support of operations against drug trafficking and the training of their armed forces. In the 1990s, military assistance to Latin American states amounted to 1,9 billion dollars per year; in the 2000s with the war on terrorism it increased to an average of 2,4 billions per year following the additional military assistance provided

¹⁸³ The United States Southern Command (US SOUTHCOM) is one of the nine Unified Combatant Commands in the US Department of Defence (DoD). It is responsible for Central America, South America and the Caribbean. It has a major influence in the sub-continent since 1989 when the Congress designated the DoD as the leading agency in charge of issues concerning drugs entering the US from abroad.

to the Andean states¹⁸⁴ (CRS 2007). Colombia is the ideal type of this support with the FARC guerrillas being the perfect example of the connection between drug trafficking and terrorism – or narco-terrorism.¹⁸⁵ The Southern Cone was less of a priority until US security agencies started pointing to the Triple Border between Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina as a safe haven for Islamist terrorist organisations (General Bantz Craddock 2005; Pion Berlin, 2005, 219). Speaking about the organised crime networks there the US SOUTHCOM Commander, General John F. Kelly (2014), argued that:

‘many of these pipelines lead directly into the United States, representing a potential vulnerability that could be exploited by terrorist groups seeking to do us harm. (...). Clan-based, Lebanese Hezbollah-associated criminal networks exploit free trade zones and permissive areas in places like Venezuela, and the Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay Tri-Border in money laundering and other illegal endeavors, as well as recruitment and radicalization efforts.’

Hence, the US both concentrates its security efforts in South America in the Amazonian region and, to a lesser extent, in the Triple Border. Its discourse towards the region is mainly based on a demonstration of the interconnections between drug trafficking, terrorism and organised crime and of a securitisation of these issues as endangering the states and requiring military action and cooperation (Marques 2003, 76). While not promoting regional integration as such, the US is trying to multilateralise efforts against drug trafficking (Grabendorff 2009, 2). General Kelly (2014) emphasises in this way the urgency of dealing with these threats:

‘the spread of criminal networks is having a corrosive effect on the integrity of democratic institutions and the stability of several of our

¹⁸⁴ The Andean Counter-drugs Initiative provided funding to Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and, outside of the region, to Brazil and Panama. While Colombia and Peru are still close partners of the US and benefit from its assistance in the fight against their respective guerrilla groups (the Shining Path in Peru and the FARC in Colombia); Venezuela interrupted the cooperation and Bolivia expelled the DEA.

¹⁸⁵ According to Favre, the concept of narcoterrorism has also been instrumentalised by the US to depoliticise the guerrilla rebellions in the sub-continent (Bigo 1991).

partner nations. Transnational criminal organisations threaten citizen security, undermine basic human rights, cripple rule of law through corruption, erode good governance, and hinder economic development.’

He adds that ‘Latin America remains the most unequal and insecure region in the world. In some countries, homicides are approaching crisis level.’

The OAS’s discourse is fundamental to understand the power relation between the US and other South America states such as Brazil – together with Venezuela, Bolivia, etc.¹⁸⁶ – in defining the concept of security and the practices it entails in the region. Up until the creation of Unasur, the OAS was the only institution where security issues were discussed in the Western Hemisphere. While the organisation has existed since 1948, it only recently took an active role in the field of security in the context of the US war on drugs. The US used the organisation – as it had previously used it during the Cold War to validate its anti-communist actions in the sub-continent – to promote a new concept of security reflecting its foreign policy in the region. A Committee on Hemispheric Security was thus established in 1995, becoming the region’s first permanent forum for security and defence issues. The keynote address of the then Vice President Al Gore (1996) at the Conference of Ministers of Defence of the Americas in Williamsburg is indicative of this shift:

‘In the past many of us have thought about security only in terms of our national defence, but new circumstances challenge us to look more deeply at the concept of security. In short, these new times demand new thinking.’

He went on to claim that:

‘The scourge of narcotics trafficking continues to pockmark our hemisphere. (...) narcotrafficking is a cancer. If it is left to metastasize – as cancer does – it will foment violence, it will undermine democracy, it

¹⁸⁶ Mexico, Central American states, Colombia and Peru mostly sided with the US’ discourse and practices on security. However, another group of South American states is reluctant to assimilate this representation of security. While, Venezuela might be the most vocal opponent, Brazil’s opposition - slightly more diplomatic – has the most decisive influence on regional cooperation.

will create corruption throughout society, it will create a disease in the communities of the nations represented here.’

A war on drugs is thus necessary which entails the involvement of the armed forces who, even if they ‘cannot be expected to be on the front line of this struggle, (...) can – in voice and in deed – join their brave colleagues in the fight against drugs.’ However, a dissenting discourse was already heard at this time in the Working Group on Defence Cooperation (OAS 1996) with the final report stating that:

‘Diverging views as to whether or to what extent the military should be employed in the fight against drug trafficking were addressed by several countries, but a clear consensus could not be achieved.’

The following meetings aimed at defining a new security concept and setting the foundations for a new security architecture for the Hemisphere. A defining moment was reached with the Declaration on Security in the Americas (OAS 2003) producing the concept of security as multidimensional:

‘The security threats, concerns, and other challenges in the hemisphere context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and non-traditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health and environmental aspects.’

It also affirms that ‘the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings. Security is strengthened when we deepen its human dimension.’

The first noticeable thing is that this definition is rather vague: between multidimensional and human security, it shows the difficulty in finding a consensus (Herz 2010, 65). Secondly, there is no mention of who will, and how to, combat these new threats except from mentioning ‘multilateral cooperation’ accompanied by a warning that ‘Traditional threats to security and the mechanisms for addressing them remain important and may be different in nature from the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to security and from cooperation mechanisms for addressing them’

and that ‘The security architecture in our Hemisphere should be flexible and provide for the particular circumstances of each subregion and each state.’ Indeed, Brazil strongly opposed the proposal presented by the US delegation that provided for cooperation between the armed forces and the national police to fight against drug trafficking and terrorism – and continued to oppose it in the following meetings (Marques 2003, 75-76; Villa and Viana 2010, 93-94). Finally, while this concept of multidimensional security could be seen as a US victory, officially putting onto the agenda the ‘new threats’ that are terrorism and drug trafficking, it is more ambiguous than that. This multidimensional concept includes economic and social aspects, ‘extreme poverty’ and ‘social exclusion’ (OAS 2003); terms promoted by Brazil which consistently led the battle in order to de-securitise the ‘new threats’. Indeed, by showing that these security issues have economic and social roots, the aim is to remove the rationale for engaging the military in the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism in the region (Villa and Viana 2010, 93-94; Kalil Mathias, Cavaller Guzzi and Avelar Giannini 2008, 75). However, both discourses are still cohabiting within the OAS: on the one hand, there is the Brazilian discourse (supported by other South American states such as Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador) with its refusal to acknowledge the existence of terrorists groups in South America¹⁸⁷ and conceptualising drug trafficking as a social issue (Brazilian General 2012c). On the other hand, there is the US discourse which appears strongly in the OAS’s various declarations on terrorism, and stresses the urgency and interconnection of threats and the need for a joint response (OAS 2005; OAS 2006; OAS 2011).

The concern for Brazil, as we saw, is to prevent this amalgamation between drug trafficking, terrorism and the use of the military – thereby impeding the securitisation

¹⁸⁷ The Brazilian government refused for instance to recognise the FARC as a terrorist group.

of these ‘new threats’. The Brazilian government, its diplomacy and the Ministry of Defence, are for the most part wary of the presence of the US military in Amazonia and at the Triple Border – fearing for its sovereignty and its natural resources in these two areas. The idea of institutionalised cooperation to fight the ‘new threats’ is also perceived as a danger to its autonomy. The government therefore entered into a power struggle with the US to define the meaning of security in the sub-continent. However, while Brazil is blocking and constraining many US initiatives, the US discourse is quite predominant in the hemisphere and tends to breach and produce tensions within the Brazilian discourse. Indeed, we have seen how a part of the Brazilian military has already adopted this securitisation discourse. Preventing this breach is not an easy task in the context of close cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries, and their exposure to new practices such as in the case of the MINUSTAH mission in Haiti, as we will see in the last chapter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter showed how the different actors participating in the regionalisation process struggle to impose their own definition of the region and their political project; and how, through these encounters, they produce together the regional official discourse analysed in Chapter five – thereby opening the possibility for (or constraining) a range of regional practices.

The analysis of the EU and Nigeria’s discourse shows points of convergence in their representations of the region and security. This discursive encounter enables the performing of ECOWAS as a regional security actor in two ways: on the one hand, the EU discourse on regional integration and security as the main path to peace and security responds to Nigeria’s national/regional security nexus; it also acknowledges

ECOWAS as the only legitimate actor to intervene in West Africa. This is a central objective of Nigeria's foreign policy as a result of its fear of the interference of extra-regional actors. Moreover, the EU promotes Nigeria as the driving force and leader of ECOWAS which converges with Nigeria's discourse on its leadership and responsibility in West Africa. Hence, this increased involvement from the EU in the late 1990s, together with the re-democratisation of Nigeria in 1999, thereby enabling a new concept of security to emerge beyond regime survival, explains the major shift of ECOWAS discourse from 'defensive integration' to 'securitisation of community'. This encounter between the EU and Nigeria and the receptivity of ECOWAS to this partnership with a 'sister' organisation, in addition to the EU's financial and technical resources – in light of ECOWAS's weaknesses and lack of resources – has enabled various practices from the EU to perform ECOWAS as a regional security actor on the basis of its own security norms. The next chapter contextualises further the encounter by showing in which settings, and through which institutions and instruments, it takes place, and what kind of regional practices it produces that enable the development of a regional political community in West Africa.

The situation in South America is more complex. The analysis of Brazil, the EU and the US/OAS discourses point to an important divergence in their representation of the region and security. While Brazil sees regional cooperation as potentially supporting its national development project and autonomy, it sees a deeper institutionalisation of Mercosur and Unasur as a threat to its sovereignty and its self-representation as a nation with global ambitions. To preserve its sovereignty, it clearly differentiates defence from security – security concerning internal issues and therefore requiring national answers. The intertextual links between this dominant Brazilian 'basic discourse' and the dominant 'unity in diversity' regional discourse

clearly show how the former constitute the latter. The discourse of the EU, promoting the agency of a more institutionalised Mercosur and, together with the US, fostering a comprehensive concept of security merging security and defence is thus perceived as a clear threat by Brazil. Indeed, it is seen as potentially opening the way for the intervention of international actors in Amazonia where most of Brazil's natural resources are located, under the pretext of the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism. Brazil thus opposes this comprehensive concept of security which securitises the 'new threats', fosters regional cooperation, and the use of the armed forces. Doing so, it hinders practices of regionalisation of foreign and security policies. However, some elements challenge this consensus: firstly, the exposure of its diplomats to the EU discourse at the moment of the creation of Mercosur and through its cooperation with the EU – and thus the need to legitimise the regional projects through the European concept of 'integration'. Secondly, the socialisation of its representatives to the EU discourse on regions and security – through the dialogue between Parlasur and the European Parliament. Lastly, the socialisation of its diplomatic officials and military officers to the comprehensive concept of security through their interaction with other armed forces and within the OAS. All these elements draw on the tensions already existent within the 'unity in diversity' discourse and participate to constitute the contesting 'securitisation of integration' discourse at the regional level (particularly at the Mercosur level as we saw in chapter five). The next chapter will show how the dominant discourses limit regional foreign and security practices, but also how the adaptation of these practices on the ground challenge the dominant Brazilian and regional discourses.

Chapter 7. The practices of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies

Introduction

After extensively analysing the discourses at play of the relevant actors trying to constitute and assert their definition of the regionalisation process in chapter six, this last chapter looks at how these discourses frame practices of regionalisation. These emerging practices show the different forms that regionalisation can take: from mere cooperation between the member states of a regional organisation to an institutionalisation of regional practices leading to the construction of a supranational regional community on the basis of regional norms. Relatively speaking, these developments can be quite straightforward as in the case of West Africa where regional and ‘external’ actors converge in their discourse and produce regional practices to deal with political and security issues in the region. There can also be struggles between the different actors and their discourses that lead to competing practices, or shifting from one type of practice to another, as in the South American case. Finally, instances of feedback impacting on specific discourses, as a result of the adaptation of practices on the ground, can also destabilise the dominant discourse in an unexpected manner. These different types of interplay between the discourses and practices of the relevant actors in the context of local events, and how they frame the regionalisation process, will be the object of this chapter.

Two case studies have been chosen here to show the different paths of the regionalisation process in West Africa and South America: the management of transnational security issues and regional interventions in cases of political and security crises. These two key areas of regional policies, triggering diverging

responses in the two regions, show how the regionalisation process cannot be explained through an interest-based analysis or a neo-functionalist framework based on the determinist effect of material and/or ideational factors. Indeed, the comparison demonstrates how the representations of the actors frame the regional practices according to their vision of the region, their security and development.

The first section of this chapter examines regional policies and practices addressing the management of transnational security issues, while the second section analyses the development of regional interventions in both regions.

I. The regional management of transnational security issues

Transnational security issues provide for an insightful case study to analyse the process of regionalisation, as they seem to be the ideal-type case proving the necessity for action at the regional level. Indeed, the last chapter emphasised how transnational security issues are securitised by international actors such as the EU and the US that assert their urgency and the need for regional cooperation to deal with them. Regional policies are presented in their discourses as necessary and natural. Both West Africa and South America suffer significantly from these transnational security issues, including: drug and weapons trafficking and organised crime in general. Terrorism is also considered a major transnational threat in West Africa and, to some extent, in South America depending on the representation of the actor concerned. The opposition between Brazil and the US on this issue was discussed in chapter six. This section will show how the encounters between the discourses of the relevant actors of the regionalisation process produce different practices to handle transnational security challenges. These practices are constituted by the dominant discourse that frames these issues in a way that justifies certain practices, whether

regional or national. The comparison between West Africa and South America precisely shows that the response given to these security issues is not a direct consequence of their existence on the ground but depend on the dominant interpretation of the relevant actors. The West African case will first be analysed, then followed by the South American case.

1. West Africa

Chapter six showed that the West African regionalisation process was characterised by a discursive encounter between the EU and Nigeria who are the key constitutors of regional action – through ECOWAS – as the appropriate level to deal with security and development challenges. We also saw that the EU's instruments are targeting every dimension of ECOWAS's peace and security architecture to perform ECOWAS as the only legitimate regional security actor. Several examples of this encounter will be analysed in this section to show how it creates particular practices of regionalisation to deal with transnational security issues. The EU plays a major role in constituting these practices through the discursive transfer of its concepts. However, Nigeria's representations and priorities also constitute the agenda of the region. The argument here is that the encounter between the EU and Nigeria's discourse gave birth to a self-reinforcing regional approach to security issues through a range of practices, institutions and networks articulated around the increasing agency of ECOWAS.

i. Framing ECOWAS policies: the EU's practices of cooperation

The EU's discourse and its practices of cooperation through the instruments described in chapter six constitute West African regional practices towards transnational security issues. It does so through its involvement in the elaboration of ECOWAS's defining texts and instruments that are, according to a military officer interviewed,

almost ‘copy pasted’ from some EU’s texts (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013b). This argument can be illustrated with the example of two key ECOWAS texts: the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) (ECOWAS 2008a), and the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) (ECOWAS 2006). They are both significant as, on the one hand, the ECPF provides the frame of action – the rationale, means and objectives – of most of ECOWAS’s policies in the field of peace and security, including transnational security issues. The Convention, on the other hand, is considered to be a landmark instrument in Africa and one of the few ECOWAS regional actions (relatively) successfully implemented (Bah 2005, 80).¹⁸⁸

The first example is the role of the EU in the elaboration of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) in 2008, which is, as said previously, one of the defining documents of ECOWAS’s peace and security architecture and a nodal text in its official discourse. While the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security (ECOWAS 1999) only refers briefly to conflict prevention with the objective to ‘strengthen cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention (...),’ the ECPF provides a much more elaborated approach to this dimension. It defines conflict and refers to ‘structural factors’ and ‘root causes,’ arguing for a comprehensive and integrated approach to prevention with long-term preventive initiatives, and for the mainstreaming of conflict prevention into ECOWAS policies and programs (ECOWAS 2008a). It closely reflects the European Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention (European Commission 2001), which focuses on conflict prevention as aiming at the ‘root causes of conflict’ and ‘structural instability’; the ECPF (ECOWAS 2008a)

¹⁸⁸ One of the main issues of ECOWAS is indeed the implementation of the regional texts made difficult by the lack of resources and capabilities of the organisation and, sometimes, the lack of initiatives of member states (Faria 2004, 12-13; Nivet 2006, 18; Ebo 2007, 2).

recommends a ‘long-term and integrated approach’ and the ‘mainstreaming’ of conflict prevention in cooperation programmes. As already mentioned, the EU was the first actor to use this concept of ‘structural stability’ in its 1996 Communication on Conflict Prevention. These strong intertextual links are the result of the activism that the EU played in the development of the ECPF through two instruments: on the one hand, the 2002-2007 Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) which financed a program that aimed to ‘assist ECOWAS to fulfil its mandate in the area of peace-building and conflict prevention, particularly to develop a Conflict Prevention strategy for the region’ (EC-West Africa 2008); and thus provided technical assistance to ECOWAS’s Executive Secretariat to draft the texts.¹⁸⁹ On the other hand, it did so through the EU-ECOWAS political dialogue: this point was regularly brought up in each ECOWAS-EU Ministerial meeting (ECOWAS-EU 2001; ECOWAS-EU 2003; etc.). Indeed, the elaboration of a conflict prevention strategy by ECOWAS was a crucial point in the EU agenda in the context of increasing security concerns stemming from West Africa. In a statement to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the EU (2005) claimed that:

‘The challenge for ECOWAS remains to integrate short-term crisis management activities into a long term preventive strategy. The EU will intensify its political dialogue with ECOWAS and its member states, in particular on policies geared to address the structural root causes of conflict in a sustainable manner (...).’

Hence, the EU used its development assistance as well as socialisation to its own conflict prevention norm through political dialogue to draft the ECOWAS ECFP – thereby performing ECOWAS as a regional security actor reflecting the EU’s identity as a regional conflict prevention project. The new priority of the EU is now to support the operationalisation of the ECPF’s thematic components with the development of

¹⁸⁹ This was done in cooperation with Denmark who also provided assistance for the drafting of the ECPF.

action plans and strategies funded by the 2008-2013 RIP (European Commission official 2013a). These new documents will also be based on EU concepts and advocate a regional and comprehensive approach which will further constitute ECOWAS practices.

The second example of the EU's practices towards ECOWAS is its influence on the transformation of the ECOWAS Moratorium on SALW into a binding convention. The EU has developed its own specific approach to SALW based on the Council of the EU Joint Actions (1999, 2002) and on an EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (2006). It made this transformation a priority in its agenda for West Africa. Indeed, the EU diagnosed SALW in its strategy as one of the major problems in West Africa, destabilising regional stability, fuelling violent conflict, organised crime and terrorism, with all the consequences these problems entail for its own security. The EU used three instruments at its disposal to further this transformation: the 2002-2007 RIP to support the work of the ECOWAS National Small Arms Commissions (EC-West Africa 2002);¹⁹⁰ direct financial and technical assistance given by the Council of the EU to the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat through a CFSP action with the purpose to 'set up the Light Weapons Unit within the ECOWAS Technical Secretariat and convert the Moratorium into a Convention on small arms and light weapons' (Council of the EU 2004). This unit is now operational within the Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) department in the ECOWAS Commission and monitors the implementation of the Convention. Lastly, EU-ECOWAS Ministerial Meetings and EU political declarations were used to put pressure on ECOWAS to prioritise this issue (ECOWAS-EU 2003; ECOWAS-EU 2005). Thus, in a declaration at the

¹⁹⁰ These National Commissions implement the ECOWAS Moratorium (now Convention) at the level of ECOWAS member states.

UNSC, the EU (2005) stated that ‘(...) we encourage the efforts of the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Program to transform the Moratorium into a legally binding instrument.’ In this case again, the EU used its political dialogue, its expertise, as well as its important technical competences – at least compared to ECOWAS’s administrative and technical weaknesses – to promote its representation of the region and its security, and contributed significantly to the drafting of the Convention (European Commission official 2013a). Indeed, the final ECOWAS (2006) Convention constructs the problem of SALW as a regional issue¹⁹¹ and responds to the EU’s priorities as expressed in its 2002 Joint Action and its 2006 Strategy with which the intertextual links are also significant (Council of the EU 2002; EU 2006).

The last example is not a text but an ECOWAS instrument to monitor transnational security issues: the West African Police Information System (WAPIS). This recent project shows again the activism of the EU. In 2010 the EU proposed the creation of a centralised regional criminal database in West Africa¹⁹² that ECOWAS member states decided to support. While the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) is the organisation implementing this project, the EU has designed it with a focus on the regional level as the necessary level of action between the national and the international to fight organised crime and terrorism. The aim is thus to create and harmonise national database systems and integrate them into a regional system in order to produce regional criminal and strategic analysis (Baeten 2013). WAPIS was officially launched in January 2014 with its main office located in the PAPS department (ECOWAS Press Release 2014). This project is a cornerstone of the regionalisation of security policy. Beyond the fact that it normalises a degree of

¹⁹¹ The Moratorium was more focused on the national level of action.

¹⁹² WAPIS is funded by the EU’s Instrument for Stability (IfS) under the Cocaine Route Programme. It should ‘support collection and analysis of police information in ECOWAS countries and Mauritania, increase police information exchange (...)’ Other projects in this programme such as SEACOP aim to develop regional intelligence and cooperation in the maritime field (European Commission 2013, 8).

trust between countries that can have access to each other's sensitive information; it also creates a network of agencies and officials in West Africa working together and (re)producing the regional 'securitisation of community' discourse framing their practices.

In all these cases the EU has used its instruments to perform ECOWAS as a regional security actor on the basis of its own identity and concepts. However, this activism of the EU is enabled by Nigeria's discourse on the region, which converges with the EU's discourse as discussed in Chapter six. The ECPF places as the core of the ECOWAS peace and security architecture the national/regional security nexus, while the SALW Convention tackles an issue considered as a major destabilising threat by Nigeria (Nigerian Representative 2013; Nigerian military official 2013). The role of Nigeria should not be understated here as the main funder (one third) and driver of ECOWAS. Thus, while the EU frames a range of regional practices on the basis of its discourse on regions and security, it is only assimilated by ECOWAS because it provides a model that fits with Nigeria's representations. The comparison with South America and Brazil suggests that if Nigeria's representations did not converge with the EU's discourse, the EU could not constitute ECOWAS in such a way.¹⁹³ Indeed, we saw in chapter six that the EU tried to promote the same discourse towards Mercosur but it did not converge with Brazil's representations and had thus almost no effect on Mercosur.

¹⁹³ A counter-example is the implementation of the ECOWAS Praia Plan on drug trafficking adopted since 2008 but which is not being implemented at the moment in spite of the EU's pressure (EEAS official 2013c; European Commission official 2013b). One of the reasons is Nigeria's representation of drug trafficking as a low priority behind terrorism, SALW and piracy (Nigerian Representative 2013; Nigerian military official 2013).

ii. *The logic of integration through regional practices*

More generally, this encounter between the EU and Nigeria constituting the ‘securitisation of community’ discourse turned regional policies into the only legitimate way of dealing with security issues. It did so in a short period of time: between 1999 and today ECOWAS has been developing regional plans and strategies addressing the whole range of transnational security issues in West Africa. The main documents are the Political Declaration and Action Plan against trafficking in human beings (ECOWAS 2001b); the binding Convention on SALW (ECOWAS 2006); a Political declaration on Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and its Action Plan (ECOWAS 2008b); the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008a). More recently, a Counter-Terrorism Strategy has been adopted (ECOWAS 2013a), as well as an ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy (ECOWAS 2013c); while an ECOWAS Strategy on the Sahel is being drafted at the moment.¹⁹⁴

The regional approach has become natural for West African states as the answer to any security issues. A community reflex – or *reflexe communautaire* as described in the case of the EU – now exists and frames security practices in the region: when a new issue arises, the response is given through the elaboration of a strategy that should be both regional and comprehensive, with important intertextual links to EU documents. The latest developments in ECOWAS support this argument. Indeed, the worsening of the terrorist problem and the increase in acts of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea immediately triggered the drafting of regional strategies.¹⁹⁵ This appeared self-evident for the military officers interviewed: for example, one stressed the

¹⁹⁴ This strategy follows the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel (European Union 2011). It is likely that the EU strategy will be taken as a model.

¹⁹⁵ The counter-terrorism strategy has not been implemented yet. However, the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy is being operationalised at a relatively fast speed with the establishment of three operational centres along the West African Coast.

multidimensional nature of terrorism, and thus the need for a comprehensive regional strategy to address it (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a); while another highlighted the necessity of holistically tackling maritime issues through a broad-based ECOWAS strategy (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013b).

This community reflex has progressively produced a range of West African networks, forums and institutions to draft, adopt and implement these texts. For example, the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), created in 2008, comes together at least twice a year to discuss transnational security issues in the region and contribute to the drafting of strategies (Nigerian ECOWAS police official 2012).¹⁹⁶ It also has the mission to operationalise the police component of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF).¹⁹⁷ Several units (small arms, regional security, maritime security) have been created in the PAPS department of the ECOWAS Commission to coordinate the work of member states and the WAPCCO on transnational issues, and are becoming increasingly autonomous (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013a). Working groups are established bringing together some member states to work on particular issues such as maritime security and provide recommendations and proposals (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013a). All these different forums continuously report to the Mediation and Security Council and/or the Authority of Heads of States and Government – the organs that take the final decision. As a Western official puts it, for each text adopted it takes ‘working groups, hundreds of seminars, and ministerial summits’ (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013b). Even bilateral practices such as border monitoring or joint maritime patrols are legitimised through, and presented as

¹⁹⁶ The WAPCCO also makes recommendation towards, and coordinate regional cooperation against transnational crime (ECOWAS Press release 2012a).

¹⁹⁷ The ESF is a standby force including military, police and civilian elements that should be ready to intervene in regional crises. Its operationalisation is still in process since 2005.

part of, the regional framework; regional practices often develop through the integration of these bilateral initiatives within wider regional networks (Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013a; Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS 2013b).¹⁹⁸ A dynamic of integration based on self-reinforcing practices is taking place in the region that can be understood through the lens of the neo-functionalist spill-over mechanism: once the regional approach has been adopted for certain issues, the socialisation process between the officials and politicians of the region, and the institutionalisation of this approach in the framework of ECOWAS, create new incentives to apply it to deal with new issues. The ‘securitisation of community’ discourse is thus (re)produced through these regional practices and becomes increasingly rooted in the representations of the West African elite. This process is also driven by the increasingly autonomous agency of ECOWAS with the ‘consensus (...) that ECOWAS has the leadership in peace and security’ (European Commission official 2011a). However, this was only enabled by the continuous convergence of the EU’s and Nigeria’s representations. As we will see now, the case of South America and Brazil shows there is no determinism in the spill over process. Indeed, if the issues are not constructed as regional in the discourse of the relevant local actors, there is no interest in creating regional practices to deal with them, and thus no spill over effect is possible. This comparison shows the limit of an interest-based analysis where it would be considered in the interest of states to deal with transnational security issues together. Instead, the analysis of the discourse of the actors shows how these issues are ascribed meaning, and thus how facts are being created to justify particular policies.

¹⁹⁸ For example, Operation Prosperity that created joint Nigeria/Benin naval patrols to fight against piracy is becoming the core of one of the operational centres of the ECOWAS integrated maritime security strategy.

2. South America

In chapter six we saw how the South American regionalisation process, framed by the ‘unity and diversity’ discourse, was constituted mainly by Brazil’s dominant articulation of security and development as autonomous national projects. However, we also saw that, in particular at the Mercosur level, this discourse is challenged by a ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse promoted by some actors within Brazil, in the region such as the Parliament of the Mercosur (Parlasur), and outside of the region such as the EU and the US. The struggle between the different discourses produces tensions in the development of practices of cooperation to deal with transnational security issues. I argue here that this tension appears between a limited institutionalisation at the level of Mercosur that was born when the regional ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse was the most prominent in the 1990s, and which is promoted by a range of actors (US, Parlasur, EU); and Brazil’s increasing framing of these practices as, first of all, national practices that can occasionally be placed within a framework of regional cooperation. The first part explains the development of cooperation practices to deal with transnational security issues in South America. The second part shows the limits of these practices and Brazil’s role in hindering regionalisation.

i. From the limited development of regional practices within Mercosur...

The ‘securitisation of integration’ regional discourse, analysed in chapter 5, presents the region as a community with its own problems and needs, implying an interdependence and mutual vulnerability concerning regional security. As explained in chapter 6, this discourse was at its strongest in the 1990s and led to the progressive institutionalisation of practices to deal with transnational security issues within Mercosur in a context of increasing concern with drug trafficking, organised crime

and the related rise of murder and crime rates in the major urban centres. Mercosur member states responded to this situation with a series of texts providing a framework for cooperation to fight against transnational security issues: from the Mercosur (1999) General plan for Reciprocal Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security to the more recent Mercosur (2006) General Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Security.¹⁹⁹ More generally, regional practices emerged to deal mainly with two issues: drug trafficking and other crime-related issues, and terrorism, particularly at the Triple Border between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. Already in 1992 a Security Group of the Triple Border was created as a diplomatic forum of consultation between the three countries. This was further reinforced in 1996 with the creation of a Trilateral Federal Police Command and the institutionalisation of this dialogue with the establishment of the Conference of the Home Ministers of the Mercosur (RMI) meeting twice a year (Oelsner 2011, 201; Flandes and Radseck 2012, 166). A couple of years later in 1998, the RED,²⁰⁰ a forum where national authorities specifically discuss drug issues, started meeting once a year to exchange information and develop complementary strategies for border protection. Two agreements adopted in 2001 and 2011 provide a framework for the cooperation in border areas between the federal polices to fight transnational crimes. Finally, a Mercosur Security Data Network (SISME) was created to exchange crime-related information and store arrest warrants from member states.

More specifically on terrorism, the Specialised Working Group on Terrorism (GTE) was established within Mercosur in 1999, partly as a response to a terrorist

¹⁹⁹ This agreement includes Mercosur member states as well as Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

²⁰⁰ The RED stands for the Specialised Reunion of the Responsible Authorities in the Field of Drugs, Prevention of its illegal Use and Rehabilitation of Drug Addiction in the Mercosur. It includes the Mercosur member states, as well as Bolivia, Chile and Peru as observers.

attack on the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992.²⁰¹ After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, a Permanent Working Group (GTP) on terrorism was added to the institutional framework to enable regular meetings between specialists of terrorism from the different national institutions concerned (ministers of foreign affairs, home affairs, intelligence agencies, etc.). The GTP aims to carry out constant monitoring of the different dimensions of organised crime (money laundering, drug and weapons trafficking, etc.) and evaluate their possible connections with terrorist groups – in particular at the Triple Border.²⁰²

Most of these practices were launched in the 1990s or early 2000s. As we saw in Chapter six, on the one hand, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay were, and are still, prone to further institutionalise Mercosur, including in the security field;²⁰³ on the other hand, the dominant Brazilian discourse promoting national autonomy was challenged at this moment by another discourse representing its security and development in regional terms as an answer to problems it analysed in terms of complex interdependence such as transnational security issues. This was the moment where the Brazilian government was the most favourable to regional integration, and together with the pressure of the US to further regional cooperation, this was also when institutionalisation advanced furthest. Indeed, following its creation the US has closely followed and promoted the role of the trilateral group at the Triple Border. In 2001, the Bush administration asked to participate in the Security Group of the Triple

²⁰¹ The Mossad, the Israeli secret service, blamed Iran and the Hezbollah for this attack (Flemes 2006, 175).

²⁰² The GTP also initiated an agreement of the RMI on operational cooperation of the intelligence services of the police: each member state can initiate common operations against terrorism and invite agents of the partner states as observers (Flemes 2006, 176; Flemes and Radseck 2009, 173).

²⁰³ Paraguay and Uruguay would welcome a deepening and further institutionalisation of Mercosur; while Argentina has adopted an expanded concept of security and sought to promote regional security practices.

Border which became the 3+1 Group in 2002²⁰⁴ with the aim to foster cooperation in the field of intelligence, promote regional cooperation and mechanisms for sharing information (Ferreira 2013, 197-199). According to Costa Vaz (quoted in Ferreira 2013, 200), and confirmed during interviews with diplomats (Brazilian diplomat 2012a), most of the mechanisms described above were set up to respond to US pressure on Brazil to be more proactive in fighting organised crime. The most institutionalised regional practices such as the trilateral group and its joint patrols in the Itaipui Lake and its tributaries, or the Regional Intelligence Centre set up in Foz de Iguaçu in 2007, actually stem from this cooperation with the US. These practices are based on a comprehensive concept of security connecting drug trafficking with organised crime and terrorism; and, indeed, they were all discussed in the 3+1 Group (3+1 Group 2003; 3+1 Group 2004). The US discourse and practices of cooperation were thus crucial for the launching and maintenance of these mechanisms. Hence, the institutionalisation of regional practices at the Mercosur level results from interaction between several actors and events. On the one hand, the setting up of Mercosur on the model of the EU, promoted by Mercosur member states including Brazil, opened the possibility for regional practices. On the other hand, this was furthered by the US pressure for a development of regional cooperation to handle transnational security issues at the Triple Border. The use of the regional framework was seen at this moment by the member states as natural and as an opportunity to strengthen a Mercosur which was framed as necessary for the stability of the region by the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse. Nowadays, another actor is trying to build on this dynamic: the Parliament of the Mercosur. Parlasur consistently tries to further this institutionalisation by demanding, for instance, the creation of a Mercosur public

²⁰⁴ This demand of the US follows 9/11 and, as was explained in chapter six, the understanding that terrorist groups in the Triple Border are financing international terrorism.

security programme and agency on the model of Europol, the EU's law enforcement agency that handles criminal intelligence (Parliament of the Mercosur 2008).²⁰⁵

This depiction of the state of cooperation at the Mercosur level shows the development of practices of cooperation at the operational level and the existence of forums to discuss transnational security issues. However, these practices are characterised by weak institutionalisation and a lack of regional agency and automatic reflex to deal with transnational threats. This is evident, firstly, with the fact that no common position is elaborated on these issues: thus, the Common Market Council²⁰⁶ rarely discusses regional security problems and, beyond regional economic and social questions, its joint communiqués refer almost exclusively to the external relations of Mercosur. This lack of consensus is then translated into Mercosur texts on security cooperation. Indeed, while these texts are frameworks enabling cooperation between the police forces of Mercosur countries, they neither define what the major security issues are, nor provide for a coherent regional strategy to deal with them. They do not go further than authorising exchange of information and some operational cooperation at the border to facilitate operations against transnational trafficking. Diamint (2010, 664) points to the superficiality of this cooperation when he argues that there has been no 'identification of regional strategic vulnerabilities and common threats' in Mercosur. The contrast with West Africa is striking where the ECOWAS summits carefully review regional security issues and regional strategies or plans are drafted for each security issue. Secondly, not only are no supranational procedures envisaged but also Mercosur does not have any permanent staff or autonomous institution to deal on a continuing basis with transnational security issues, monitor

²⁰⁵ Parlasur also asked for a harmonisation of criminal law between Mercosur countries (Parliament of the Mercosur 2010). These initiatives suggest, as was commented in chapter six, the influence of the dialogue with the EU Parliament.

²⁰⁶ The Common Market Council is the highest decision-making body of the Mercosur. It includes the ministers of foreign affairs and of economy of the member states who take all decisions by consensus.

progress or launch new initiatives.²⁰⁷ All the forums and working groups such as the RED or the GTE are composed of member states' staff. At the end, all depends on the willingness of the member states which shows in the sporadic periodicity of meetings and coordinated operations. The most institutionalised and productive forum is the 3+1 group which benefits from the US impulse. Operations against transnational issues also reflect this state of cooperation: each state stays within its own border when simultaneous operations are carried out with policemen exceptionally crossing their border after previous authorisation. These operations are not informed by a regional strategy identifying the threats and the means, this is left at the discretion of each member state, including whether to use military or police security forces, with this further complicating cooperation between Mercosur member states (Adviser to the Minister of Defence 2011).

Hence, while some practices have been established in the context of the growing concern with transnational security threats, the momentum of the creation of Mercosur and US pressures to take initiatives, this has not translated into a self-reinforcing process such as in the case of ECOWAS. Neither an interest-based explanation nor a neo-functionalist process of spill over can apply here. On the one hand, it could be argued that it is in the interest of member states to deal jointly with transnational organised criminal gangs that exploit the porous and weakly monitored borders to carry out their activities, and dismantle trafficking routes and criminal networks that cut across South American countries. The literature on South America, as discussed in chapter five, usually points to the inadequacy of Mercosur states' responses to the 'realities' of their security environment on the ground (Diamint 2010, 664; Flandes and Radseck 2012, 177); arguing that Mercosur is progressively

²⁰⁷ For instance, even the Mercosur Centre for the Coordination of Police Training (CCCCP) does not have a permanent seat or leadership; the rotating semi-annual presidency appoints the director who manages it from its own national institution.

adapting to this environment. It seems, on the contrary that the opposite process is unfolding with an increased focus on bilateral relations within the South American region. On the other hand, the practices described above, that emerged mostly in the 1990s and early 2000s, have not led to further regional practices; nor to an automatic reflex to use the regional framework. Instead, these practices have remained as weakly institutionalised as possible, and most importantly, as national as possible – elaborated, led and carried out operationally at the national level. Comparing this situation with West Africa, while operational actions might arguably be more efficient in Mercosur due to the weak capacities and resources of West African states, West African states are constructing a regional system from the top²⁰⁸ where all the new practices are being established with a regional perspective in mind. In Mercosur, the national perspective prevails at the foundation of these practices. The contrast between the ambition of the WAPIS system in West Africa, and the SISME in Mercosur illustrates this difference. Both projects concern the development of regional police information systems aiming to create a centralised regional criminal database. However, whereas the SISME entirely depends on the willingness of the member states to participate and did not entail any harmonisation of their legal systems (Flemes and Radseck 2009, 174); WAPIS targets the harmonisation of national procedures to establish an automatic sharing of information at the regional level.

The role of Brazil is central here to understand this difference. The dominant discourse framing security and development as national issues and projects restricts regional practices to mere cooperation with no possibility of spill over towards

²⁰⁸ It is fair to say that in West African countries the security sectors (judicial system, police forces, intelligence services, etc.) started from a very low level. In these past 15 years ECOWAS as well as the international community have invested important amount of money and effort to reform and build their capacities.

increased regionalisation. As we saw, from Lula's presidency, the counter-discourse favouring integration has gotten increasingly weaker leading to a growing disinterest in Mercosur in favour of South American integration. The South American framework for cooperation enables Brazil to regain control over all its policies and further dilute the limited institutionalisation of Mercosur, in particular in the security field. This process will be analysed in the following section.

ii. ...to bilateral cooperation in South America

The formal process of regionalisation is much more recent at the South American level than in the Mercosur region. Unasur includes several sectoral councils dealing with the different dimensions of action of the organisation. Three councils address security and defence issues: the South American Council of Defence (CDS) set up in 2008; the South American Council on the Global Drug Problem set up in 2009; and the recently created South American Council for Citizen Security, Justice and Coordination of Actions against Transnational Organised Delinquency (2012). While the CDS deals exclusively with defence cooperation (training, industry, etc.), the two other councils are supposed to address transnational security issues. After a few years several working groups and consultation mechanisms²⁰⁹ are in the process of being set up within these councils. However, they still mainly are forums for dialogue between the member states: they only entail low commitments from them with occasional meetings, and have not led (and will not in the medium future) to the adoption of frameworks enabling regional security cooperation on the model of Mercosur documents. Consequently, no regional practices have been established at the South

²⁰⁹ The South American Council on the Global Drug Problem includes, for instance, a Mechanism for Regular Consultation of Judicial, Police, Finance, Custom Authorities and Organisms dealing with the fight against Drugs in South American countries. The South American Council in the field of Citizen Security, Justice and Coordination of Actions against Transnational Organised Delinquency is in the process of setting up three working groups, one for each dimension.

American level to deal with these transnational security issues beyond a few seminars and plans to increase dialogue and exchange of information. This can be linked to the ‘unity in diversity’ official discourse analysed in chapter five: by framing integration as cooperation between autonomous and sovereign member states this discourse considerably limits the extent and form of the South American regionalisation process.

One of the main impediments to this development, as was discussed previously, is the lack of definition of security in this discourse, and its separation from defence, which hinders regional cooperation. Brazil’s role is key here, as was explained in chapter six: the Brazilian government was very careful to create three distinct councils in order, on the one hand, to keep the armed forces from being involved in the fight against transnational crime; and, on the other hand, to separate the issue of drugs from transnational organised crime. Conceptualising drugs as a multidimensional issue with an economic and social aspect goes against the US discourse associating drug trafficking, criminality and terrorism. This distinction largely limits the possibility of cooperation with the US armed forces. As we saw the US favours a comprehensive concept of security and regional cooperation in the region including the use of the armed forces which, in the dominant Brazilian discourse, threatens Brazil’s sovereignty. A Brazilian diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012g) confirmed that Brazil avoided the elaboration of a regional policy to fight drug trafficking in great part because of the US military presence in Colombia.

With Brazil as the main driver behind the creation of Unasur, it can be argued, in the light of the analysis of the Brazilian discourse, that the purpose of the government was to re-design regional integration on the basis of its own dominant discourse – in the context of the weakening of the counter-discourse that favoured Mercosur

integration. The case of cooperation for transnational security issues is particularly illustrative because Brazil used Unasur to maintain the separation between security and defence, desecuritise the drug issue and restrict cooperation to the bilateral level – pulling away from the path taken by Mercosur.²¹⁰ This is well reflected in this comment of an adviser to the Minister of Defence (2011) about border cooperation stressing that ‘the rules, the regional institutions have to be sufficiently open to allow for bilateral cooperation.’ The Unasur sectoral councils were thus set up as a non-constraining institutional framework providing an umbrella to a web of bilateral security agreements with Brazil at its core. Indeed, with more than half of the Amazonian territory, Brazil remains the key state for any regional agreement; it shares extensive borders with almost all Amazonian states (Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana and Suriname). Among a large array of bilateral security cooperation agreements with all South American states, the most institutionalised mechanisms are the bilateral anti-drugs commissions that were launched between Brazil, on the one side, and Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia and Venezuela, on the other side, to support collaboration between police forces and intelligence agencies (Flemes and Radseck 2012, 164; Brazilian diplomat 2012g). The Brazilian diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012d) responsible for this cooperation at the Itamaraty describes the work of these commissions in this way:

‘We organise them at the foreign ministry and we put together all the other agencies that are interested in having an official formal dialogue with our neighbours, to be in contact, develop joint actions, exchange information. We also review the state of play, the priorities and coordinate maybe a little bit our policies.’

²¹⁰ While Mercosur member states, as was explained in the previous part, are more favourable to this institutionalisation, Brazil is able to find support to its discourse among other South American states such as Venezuela and Bolivia, both worried with the US presence in the region.

The discontinuous character of this cooperation was highlighted in all the interviews by Brazilian diplomats. One of them stressed that:

‘We get together more or less once every semester, we try to, sometimes it doesn’t happen. (...) they very rarely meet two times per year. (...) There are some exercises to fight narcotrafficking that involve the armed forces, and the federal police’ (Brazilian diplomat 2012g).

Another diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012a) emphasised that:

‘the borders, it’s bilateral, only bilateral. And sometimes we do operations with the federal police or the armed forces at the borders to catch smugglers or criminals but it’s very erratic.’

These descriptions show the weak institutionalisation and the low level of coordination of policies. It demonstrates the non-habitual character of consultation among the states concerned. This does not mean that there is no dialogue between the states but that it has not reached a level where they meet automatically on a regular basis to discuss their common security issues. The dialogue is still occasional depending on the interest of the moment. Accordingly, operational cooperation is launched when both parties evaluate it as necessary to address a specific problem (Brazilian diplomat 2012d). This form of cooperation is clearly framed by the Brazilian discourse which conceptualises security as an internal problem that occasionally requires cooperation with neighbouring countries but should be driven by national priorities and policies.

However, whereas Brazil aims to maintain this situation, it is challenged by other South American states that want to go further, such as Colombia which, for instance, wanted to merge the two sectorial councils dealing with transnational issues (Brazilian diplomat 2012d). Another example is the creation of the Permanent Security Committee (COMPERSEG) between Argentina and Chile, which since 1995 has maintained a constant political dialogue between the two countries on bilateral,

regional and international security issues (Saint-Pierre and Winand 2004, 60; Oelsner 2011, 200; Flandes and Radseck 2012, 164). There is thus a structured and institutionalised dialogue on security issues between two key countries in South America which shows the willingness of these states to go beyond the degree of institutionalisation of the existing regional integration schemes. We also saw in the previous chapter how Chile proposed the creation of a Unasur security architecture to deal with regional security issues. Operation Agata, the largest operation led by the Brazilian armed forces within its borders is also illustrative of the constraining power of Brazil. This massive operation, including the Brazilian armed forces together with its police forces, is already at its 8th edition since the first one launched in September 2011. As part of the Brazilian Strategic Border Plan, it aims to re-occupy the border area and fight against all sorts of transnational and environmental crimes. While the ten South American neighbours are invited as observers to this operation, they are not invited as participants by Brazil in spite of their declared interest in joining. A Brazilian colonel (Brazilian colonel 2012b) commented on this tension in an interview:

‘There exists a proposal of some countries that the Agata operations become joint operations, that military staff from other nations participate. But our diplomacy at the national level still doesn’t find this interesting. In my opinion it would be good. (...). All the countries at the border had interest. (...) I can guarantee you that we have Argentina, Paraguay finding out information because they want to launch similar operations. (...) In Suriname, in Guyana, there is a great demand from Guyana that we do these operations jointly because they want to participate. (...) With Colombia also, there is a great Colombian interest to participate in a joint way. But we don’t do that. It’s much more sensitive with the Americans. (...) From the military point of view there is no problem, from the diplomatic point of view, I don’t know.’

This refusal of the Itamaraty was confirmed by the Brazilian diplomat (Brazilian diplomat 2012d) responsible for cooperation to tackle transnational security issues:

‘If you ask me about operations on the field, it will only happen at bilateral level, maybe trilateral if it’s well coordinated. (...). Agata is only Brazil, others don’t participate, they are only observers to see it’s a transparent operation.’

This operation is particularly sensitive for Brazil. It includes its armed forces which, as we saw in chapter six, is a very debated question in Brazil. Brazil’s reluctance to coordinate its policy to fight transnational security issues with other South American states is quite obvious and carefully driven by the refusal to open the possibility for a regional strategy or a regional military force that would represent a threat to its national autonomy, sovereignty, and possibly to its natural resources. However, the demands of other South American states show the struggle to define security regionalisation in the region.

This struggle also unfolds within Brazil through the increased exposure of its armed forces to new security practices. A good example is Brazil’s leadership of the UN peace operation in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which has clearly helped to transform the role of the armed forces in Brazil. The MINUSTAH was created in 2004 following the departure into exile of President Aristide in the midst of an armed conflict. The mandate of the mission, including a military and civilian dimension, was mainly to ensure a ‘secure and stable environment’ and support the political process (UNSC Resolution 1542 2004). While the MINUSTAH is a UN mission it has been presented as a Latin American or South American mission with its command attributed to Brazil.²¹¹ Interestingly, the role of the MINUSTAH rapidly shifted from a first period when it acted as a buffer between the different factions in a context of

²¹¹ It includes personnel from several Latin American countries including Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Salvador, Honduras which represent more than 50% of the total with 4071 military and police personnel out of 7638 (1451 from Brazil). Among these 4071 Latin American troops, 3486 come from South America (Réseau de Recherche sur les Opérations de Paix 2014b).

political violence, to police work addressing criminality and all sorts of trafficking (Gauthier and Bonin 2008, 52). A role considered by Brazil as unsuitable for the armed forces and only recently authorised under special circumstances and conditions in the major urban centres and at the borders such as in the case of the Agata operations.²¹² We saw in the analysis of the Brazilian discourse how a contesting representation is developing within the armed forces that promotes a comprehensive concept of security, merging security and defence and opening the way for regional cooperation. The interviews conducted with Brazilian military personnel strongly suggest that these new practices in Haiti directly contributed to this shift in the discourse (Brazilian diplomat 2012a; Brazilian colonel 2012b; Brazilian diplomat 2012g; adviser to the Minister of Defence 2011). A Brazilian colonel (2012b) commented on the MINUSTAH in this way:

‘These peace operations are very useful to strengthen relations. But they serve a lot for people to learn to work for this type of new employment of the force that we are not used to. It’s very important that the continent takes responsibility for this. (...) we need to have the capacity of projection, but also the capacity to operate in the continent when it’s necessary. (...). MINUSTAH is very good to learn.’

This testimony by a Brazilian diplomat (2012g) shows how this stance threatens the dominant Brazilian discourse:

‘I have been already in Haiti and I have seen them at work, (...), they do something similar to police work there. But in the beginning they were in confrontation, now it’s police work. You had the situation of military personnel acting against gangs. (...). Our armed forces were trained in Haiti to do police work, they learned it there. When they came back they were ready to do it (...). In my opinion, it’s not something we should do. There is always a big risk of contamination.’

In Haiti, the Brazilian armed forces not only started learning on a large scale how to deal with criminality issues, but also did it in cooperation with other South American

²¹² This is regulated in the Brazilian Constitution and by several complementary acts (Brazilian Congress 1999; Brazilian Congress 2004; Brazilian Congress 2010).

armed forces already more used to dealing with these kinds of issues. This is a clear case of unplanned adaptation of practices on the ground that fed back into the Brazilian discourse. The contesting representation – analysed in chapter six – within the armed forces on the merging of security and defence and regional cooperation shows how this new role is becoming more natural and necessary for part of the military institution, and this through experiences such as the MINUSTAH. The existence of the Agata operations involving the Brazilian armed forces – even though still restricted to the national level – also demonstrates that the distinction between security and defence is also being challenged in practice and is blurring the line.

Hence, policies to fight transnational security issues in South America went from the emergence of regional practices within Mercosur to a shift back to bilateral cooperation within the non-constraining framework of Unasur – thereby avoiding the pressure of external actors such as the US and the EU. This type of security cooperation limits the possibility of regionalisation; a regionalisation considered threatening by Brazil as a consequence of its construction of its approach to security and development as a purely national project requiring the complete autonomy of the nation. However, this security cooperation is being challenged by other states in the region more prone to actual integration and, within Brazil, through the exposure of its armed forces to other kinds of practices.

II. The development of regional interventions

The case of regional interventions (for electoral purposes, political or military) is revealing of the emergence (or not) of a political community. Firstly, it shows if the regional organisations have developed an agency towards political and security issues and can act as one when problems arise. To see if regional practices have developed

towards this direction, we will look if these issues (even if purely internal to a member state) are being referred to, discussed and answered at the regional level. The habitual character of these regional practices should also be taken into account: are these practices an automatic reflex, are they well accepted, considered as normal and necessary by the member states? Secondly, regional interventions also ask the question of which norms are used as a foundation for intervention: are there consensually accepted norms at the regional level that trigger regional practices of intervention whenever these norms are being breached or could be challenged – even if the concerned member state does not agree with the intervention? If so, this indicates a move towards supranationality and the construction of the regional political community. The comparison between West Africa and South America's practices of interventions will demonstrate how the discourses of the different actors analysed in chapters five and six frame the possibility for intervention. The West African case shows a clear move towards supranationality and the constitution of a regional community; this process will be the object of the next section. The South America case, conversely, demonstrates a very low level of agency and normative consensus in the frame of the conceptualisation of regional integration as a cohabitation of sovereign states.

1. West Africa

A regional practice of intervention is emerging in West Africa to answer political and security issues in the region; it includes a wide range of actions from election monitoring to military intervention. These interventions are in the process of becoming an automatic reflex for ECOWAS member states and are based on a set of regionally agreed norms and values. I argue here that this move towards supranationality is constituted by the encounter between the EU and Nigeria analysed

in chapter six. Indeed, both Nigeria's representation of a national/regional security nexus and its sense of vulnerability requiring the cohesion of the region, together with the EU's constitution of ECOWAS agency on the basis of its own values and norms, have been indispensable for this move to happen. The EU has provided a model that has fulfilled Nigeria's needs. The first section of this part looks at the development of the habit of intervention in West Africa, while the second section shows how the EU and Nigeria constitute the regional political community.

i. The development of a practice of intervention in West Africa

Regional interventions in West Africa were already initiated at the beginning of the 1990s with the ECOMOG²¹³ missions in Liberia (1990) and Sierra Leone (1997). While these missions provided precedents for intervention in the region, they were almost exclusively decided and led by Nigeria²¹⁴ on an *ad hoc* basis. In spite of being justified within the framework of ECOWAS, they were also opposed by some member states and did not rely on consensually agreed regional norms.²¹⁵ This situation shifted from 1999 with the introduction of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security that provided a legal basis for intervention, and as such moved beyond the strict principle of sovereignty in order to enable intervention²¹⁶ in the case of an:

²¹³ ECOMOG was a provisional force set up in the 1990s to intervene in the West African civil wars. The decision to transform it into a permanent force was taken in 1999 but only operationalised now with the ESF.

²¹⁴ For these missions, Nigeria provided between 70 and 80% of the troop contributions, and 80-90% of the funding (Obi 2008, 190; Alli 2012, 54).

²¹⁵ A whole literature analyse these landmark interventions by ECOWAS, sometimes rather negatively. Scholars usually criticise ECOMOG on several points: the lack of financial resources and equipment; an unclear mandate, lack of transparency and neutrality; a lack of political control over the military; Nigeria's domination; a lack of joint preparations; etc. (Alao 2000, 14; Faria 2004, 15-16; Obi 2009, 122; etc.).

²¹⁶ Interventions include 'recourse to the Council of Elders, the dispatch of fact-finding missions, political and mediation missions or intervention by ECOMOG' (art 27, ECOWAS 1999).

‘internal conflict: a) that threatens to trigger a humanitarian disaster or, b) that poses a serious threat to peace and security in the sub-region; In event of serious and massive violation of human rights and the rule of law. In the event of an overthrow or attempted overthrow of a democratically elected government’ (art. 25, ECOWAS 1999).

At the same time, it created the ECOWAS peace and security architecture. One of the main institutions of this architecture is the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) that comprises nine member states elected for a period of two years with the mandate to take decisions on peace and security on behalf of the Authority (ECOWAS Heads of State and Government). The MSC is thus officially a supranational decision-making body. The Mechanism was then complemented by the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (ECOWAS 2001a), which provides a normative basis for ECOWAS member states defining the constitutional principles that should be respected in the region, rules for the organisation of elections (and ECOWAS monitoring), the role of the armed forces, good governance principles and so on. Finally, the ECPF reaffirmed this commitment in 2008:

‘ECOWAS is imbued with the necessary supranational powers (...), as well as the legitimacy to intervene to protect human security in three distinct ways, namely: a. The Responsibility to prevent – actions taken to address the direct and root causes of intra and inter-state conflicts that put populations at risk. b. The Responsibility to react – actions taken in response to grave and compelling humanitarian disasters. c. The Responsibility to rebuild – actions taken to ensure recovery, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation in the aftermath of violent conflicts, humanitarian or natural disasters’ (art. 41, ECOWAS 2008a)

In parallel with these institutional and normative developments, ECOWAS member states started discussing and dealing together with political and security issues arising in the region, as we already saw for transnational security issues. The Final Communiqués of the Summits of the Heads of States and Government usually provide an overview of all the peace and security issues in the region and a common

stance on these problems (see, for instance, ECOWAS Authority 2013a; ECOWAS Authority 2013b). Chapter five already analysed this dimension of the regional official discourse. Unusually, these communiqués comment on the internal issues of the member states; including those of the regional power, Nigeria, in the Niger Delta and in the northeastern part of the country. Few regional organisations across the world are allowed this kind of involvement in the internal affairs of their member states; as we will discuss later, this is not the case of either Mercosur or Unasur.²¹⁷

From this joint assessment of issues ECOWAS developed a practice of intervention in the region. For instance, electoral observation missions are launched at the occasion of each election in an ECOWAS member state. These missions are under the responsibility of the Electoral Assistance Unit within PAPS. They include fact-finding missions on the preparation of the elections, discussions with the political actors, monitoring of the voting process and of the result, etc. Electoral observation missions were sent, among many others, to Togo and Côte d'Ivoire in 2010, Niger in 2011, Sierra Leone in 2012, etc.²¹⁸ These missions are well accepted by member states that do not question their presence on the ground. They can also have an important influence on the political situation. In the 2010 elections in Côte d'Ivoire the ECOWAS electoral mission refused to acknowledge President Laurent Gbagbo as the winner of the presidential election and asserted the victory of his opponent Alassane Ouattara. ECOWAS member states consensually backed this position against Gbagbo (ECOWAS Press Release 2010d). Paradoxically, President Gbagbo had to accept ECOWAS monitoring – a 'normal' practice – as a member of the ECOWAS

²¹⁷ Taking an example from another continent: these issues are not raised either during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) community summits. In 2005, for instance, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra threatened to walk out of the summit if the issue of violence in southern Thailand was raised (Morada 2009, 198).

²¹⁸ See ECOWAS press releases that provide an account of the ECOWAS electoral missions process: ECOWAS Press Release (2010a) on Togo; ECOWAS Press Release (2011) on Niger; ECOWAS Press Release (2012c) on Sierra Leone.

Community and found himself removed from power as a result of the regional normative framework.

When a crisis arises in an ECOWAS member state, ECOWAS now instantly appoints a mediator speaking on behalf of all the member states. ECOWAS has by now conducted several mediation initiatives such as in Côte d'Ivoire (a number of times since 2001), Togo (2005), Guinea (2007), Niger (2009), Senegal (2012) and in the on going Malian crisis. Again, this role of ECOWAS as a mediator is very well accepted, and even requested, by the member states and turned into an automatic reflex to deal with regional political crises. In the case of Togo, Nigeria invited the two main leaders to Abuja where they signed a peace accord (Alli 2012, 55-57). During the 2010 Guinean elections ECOWAS played a key role to avoid violence between the first and second round of the elections. There was a conflict over who would be the head of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). On request of the Guinean government, ECOWAS undertook mediation and dialogue with the political actors and managed to appoint a Malian General as the president of the CENI. The elections went quite smoothly after this episode (European Commission official 2011a).²¹⁹ This shows the deep involvement of ECOWAS in national political affairs. It very much suggests a move towards a regional community where an official from one state can supervise the elections of another member state.

Sanctions in case of breach of the democratic principle have also become common practice for ECOWAS member states. Niger was, for instance, suspended by ECOWAS following the military coup in 2010 (ECOWAS Press Release 2010b). At the beginning of May 2012, the ECOWAS Authority imposed diplomatic, economic and financial sanctions against the junta in Guinea Bissau that seized power in the

²¹⁹ See also, on ECOWAS role in Guinea, ECOWAS Press Release (2010c).

12th April military coup (ECOWAS Press Release 2012b). Finally, ECOWAS also uses the threat of, and undertakes, actual military interventions. The threat was used in the case of Côte d'Ivoire in 2010 as will be further explained in the next part. The first interventions through the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) (and not the *ad hoc* ECOMOG) were launched in Mali with the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) and in Guinea-Bissau with the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB).²²⁰ From the creation of the ECOMOG in 1990 to the operationalisation of the ESF, the idea to have a force permanently on standby has been internalised and deemed necessary by ECOWAS member states, as well as the idea that the consent of the concerned state might not be required for intervention if the government does not respect a small number of core principles relating to democracy. This consensus was put forward by a high level Nigerian ECOWAS official (2013a) in this way:

‘at least the countries accept that as a principle. When it happens in one country, all the others will put pressure together. There is already a consensus building on the political vision we have and how democracy should be done in the countries, the minimum standards. If you don't meet them, you become an outcast in the region, you are not following the rules. This is moral pressure. (...) We've got a normative framework and the institutional mechanisms. We are also acquiring this moral authority that ECOWAS is not biased, that there are sanctions if the principles are not followed. There is a consensus building in the region but it's still fragile.’

The still fragile consensus building in the region refers to the fact that while ECOWAS increasingly intervenes, cases of breach of the democratic principle and regional crises and conflicts are still recurrent in the region. This chronic instability actually fosters the regionalisation process, as in the case of transnational security issues. It enabled the creation of a habit of dialogue, discussion and a range of

²²⁰ In both missions Nigeria provided most of the troops.

regional practices, as described above, which have become internalised by member states. Actors of these practices include the armed forces of the member states that are now supposed to work together within the ESF and are thus trained within regional centres dedicated to this task.²²¹ High-level military officers are, for instance, socialised to this regional approach through the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff. This Committee used to meet twice a year but from 2012 it started meeting monthly to provide a direction to ECOWAS's policy in Mali (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a). A Western military officer seconded at ECOWAS (2013b) describes the situation in this way:

‘So they know each other by heart, they solve problems together. It’s quite remarkable, I attended some of them. There are acute crises, some get angry, others take on to calm them. There are negotiations between the heads of joint staff, they evoke their issues, they all want to exist. There is a real dynamic. (...) CONOPS²²² are always defined at their level, then it goes to the political level but they always have a say in it.’

The interaction in this Committee shows an important knowledge of each other's positions, points of view and roles, sharing the same community language. They have assimilated the regional approach to crisis management and resolution as the only legitimate approach in the region (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a). All these instances of interaction through the creation of regional practices of intervention (re)produce the ‘securitisation of community’ discourse analysed in Chapter five and fuel a self-reinforcing process of regionalisation.

²²¹ There are three ECOWAS training centres of excellence: The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana, *l'Ecole de Maintien de la Paix* in Mali, and the National Defence College in Nigeria. All these centres have signed a memorandum of understanding with ECOWAS to create a West African integrated curriculum and training to prepare civilian experts, police and military staff for deployment in peace support and electoral observation missions. All the West African officials interviewed have emphasised the role of these centres in socialising the police and military officials from the region, improving their knowledge of each other, and promoting a sense of community (Nigerian ECOWAS military officer 2013a; Burkinabe ECOWAS military officer 2013; Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013a; National Defence College official 2013).

²²² The Concept of Operations (CONOPS) is the document presenting the joint force commander's goals for a mission and how it will attain these goals with the resources available.

Nevertheless, the key question here is: to which extent is this process actually the direct result of the chronic instability and worsening of security issues in West Africa which is assumed by most of the IR literature on West Africa, as discussed in chapter four? I argue here that this interest-based logic depicting regional interventions as the rational answer to regional crises does not explain the process. Indeed, most of Africa's sub-regions suffer from the same chronic instability, but this does not mean that other regional organisations have undertaken the same move towards supranational regional interventions and community building. It has not been the case of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Southern Africa where sovereignty is the clear dominant principle when addressing peace and security issues,²²³ neither of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Eastern Africa, the security situation of which is even worse than West Africa. Democratic fragility is also a major issue in South America as we will see in the last part of this chapter; however, this has not translated into any binding regional norm or practice of intervention. Insofar as supranationality is a real challenge to the nation state, diminishing its sovereignty and control within its own borders, this lack of development in many regions is not so surprising. ECOWAS, together with the EU where the tension between supranationality/sovereignty is constantly present, is remarkably the only regional organisation that has followed this path. Security issues on the ground provide the context to which the region has to adapt, but the form taken by this adaptation is the product of this encounter between the Nigerian and the European discourses which constituted the regional approach and supranationality as

²²³ The SADC for instance includes Zimbabwe, an authoritarian state led by Mugabe since 1980. The regional organisation, with South Africa as its core, has refused to exert any coercive pressure to promote the democratisation of the country. The African Union (AU) backed the 'quiet' mediation role of South Africa President Thabo Mbeki and got involved in the monitoring of the 2008 elections. The AU was reluctant to point to the obvious problem and declared its satisfaction with the elections (Williams 2009, 410).

the evident solution to West Africa's problems; leading to this paradox where member states accept the rules, normative framework and agency of ECOWAS in their internal affairs, even though they could be the next target of sanctions and intervention. An interest-based analysis could not explain this willingness from a regional power such as Nigeria to accept supranationality which, in this kind of framework, would be seen as going against its national interest. Understanding this shift requires looking at how the Nigerian discourse frames this national interest and opened the way for the adoption of the EU-promoted model. The next part analyses empirical instances of this encounter between the EU and Nigeria to show how they constitute the agency of the regional organisation.

ii. The EU, Nigeria and the constitution of a regional political community

In the first section, this chapter demonstrated how the EU-ECOWAS political dialogue was one of the instruments used by the EU to contribute to the drafting of the ECPF and the ECOWAS Convention on SALW. This part will, more generally, show how the political dialogue is used by the EU – in convergence with Nigeria – to perform ECOWAS as a regional actor with the right to intervene in the internal affairs of its member states to protect some core values and norms. The comprehensiveness of this dialogue which is well structured and touches upon all issues of interest for the two regions, in particular in the field of peace and security, is described in this way by an EEAS official (EEAS official 2013c):

‘[ECOWAS is] the only regional partner with who we have a stable dialogue, article 8. We already had 19 ministerial meetings. The meetings are regular, they involve the President of the Commission and the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the two states that have the presidency. (...). The agenda is structured around an analysis of global African questions, good governance, democracy, drugs, then economic integration and trade. The exercise is well known and stable, and ECOWAS is very committed and took ownership of the process.’

The EU-ECOWAS dialogue produces its effects in two ways: firstly, the bi-regional dialogue requires constant interactions and discussions between ECOWAS member states to present themselves as a unified political partner to the EU. Indeed, the constant exchange of views and joint monitoring of crises, with the EU constantly exercising political pressure on the region, requires ECOWAS member states to prepare strong common positions to enter the dialogue from a position of strength. This was highlighted by several West African officials (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013; Dr Ibn Chambas 2011).²²⁴ As a result, the dialogue with the EU has contributed since 1998 to the emergence, and now to the reinforcement, of a consultation and cooperation practice between ECOWAS member states on peace and security issues.

Secondly, one of the stated aims of the EU-ECOWAS political dialogue on West African security and stability is for the EU to make sure that ECOWAS will react and take a position each time one of the ‘essential’ principles²²⁵ is in danger of being breached. Through this dialogue the EU tries to put pressure on ECOWAS to take a stance and strengthen its agency on the basis of the emerging values and norms of the regional community. Joint declarations are thus issued on every crisis in West Africa. For instance, when Niger’s President Tandja tried to extend his non-renewable mandate in October 2009 the EU and ECOWAS declared that ‘Both parties agreed that the action of the authorities are in grave violation of democratic principles’ (ECOWAS-EU 2009). This led, as we saw above, to the exclusion of Niger from ECOWAS. Similarly, for Guinea after the violent repression of a political

²²⁴ This is also the case for the negotiation between the EU and ECOWAS to establish the priorities for the European Development Fund (EDF) (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013); as well as for the current negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and ECOWAS.

²²⁵ The ‘essential elements’ in the Cotonou Agreement (ACP-EC 2000) are: the respect for human rights, democratic principles, and the rule of law.

demonstration in September 2009, the EU-ECOWAS 16th Ministerial Troika Meeting (ECOWAS-EU 2009) stated: ‘the two Parties strongly condemned the violent repression of the peaceful political demonstration on 28 December 2009 in Conakry by the security forces (...).’ European Commission officials (2011a; 2011c) also insisted on the role of the EU in keeping ECOWAS together politically during the 2010 crisis in Côte d’Ivoire. ECOWAS member states were divided on the position ECOWAS should take in the context of the African Union and South Africa’s position leaning towards non-intervention. Nigeria, in particular, together with the EU worked on elaborating an ECOWAS common stance on the crisis (European Commission officials 2011; EEAS official 2013c). Eventually, ECOWAS took a strong common position on the refusal of President Gbagbo to transfer its power to the winner of the elections, Mr. Alassane Ouattara: ‘the Community would be left with no alternative but to take other measures, including the use of legitimate force, to achieve the goals of the Ivorian people’ (ECOWAS Authority 2010). This kind of declaration, envisaging the use of force to re-establish democracy, was the first of its kind for ECOWAS. It suggests a significant shift towards the constitution of a regional community where the consent of the state and its sovereignty do not take precedence over the regional norms. Nigeria and the EU played key roles here as the drivers behind this shift. Finally, in the case of the on going crisis in Mali the EU and ECOWAS are maintaining a constant dialogue to deal with the situation which resulted in the AFISMA mission²²⁶ led by Nigeria and including troops from the whole region,²²⁷ with the financial support of the EU. According to an EEAS official, the President of the ECOWAS Commission Ouedraogo and the EEAS managing Director for Africa called each other regularly, while Ouedraogo travelled several

²²⁶ The ECOWAS troops of the AFISMA are now integrated in the UN missions, MINUSMA.

²²⁷ Nigeria committed to send 1200 troops, Benin 300, Burkina Faso 650, Guinea 144, Senegal 500, Niger 500, and Togo 500 (Réseau de Recherche sur les Opérations de Paix 2014a).

times to Brussels, and statements and sanctions were shared before being made public (EEAS official 2013c).

The increasing amount of actions that ECOWAS is taking to monitor the stability of the region and prevent a breach of the democratic principle in member states, as was previously highlighted, testifies to the success of this dialogue (Nigerian ECOWAS political official 2013). Dr Ibn Chambas (2011), former President of the ECOWAS Commission, confirmed this role of the EU by acknowledging that the political dialogue had facilitated many times the work of ECOWAS and its member states on these sensitive issues. A Nigerian ECOWAS political official (2013) also commented that the political dialogue with the EU was consciously used by ECOWAS to pressure the countries to abide by the regional norms. Hence, the central feature of this dialogue is not only the transfer of EU values and norms²²⁸ but also the construction of a regional community on the basis of these political values and norms with the supranational right to intervene in its member states. ECOWAS member states, and Nigeria in particular, draw on this political dialogue to reinforce the agency of ECOWAS and the, still fragile, consensus around regional norms.

Lastly, the encounter between Nigeria and the EU produces a complex outcome with a feedback effect at the ECOWAS discursive level – unplanned and unwanted by the EU. On the one side, Nigeria converges with, and draws on, the EU discourses and practices to perform ECOWAS, which can be understood as a success of the EU in defining the region. On the other side, the practice of intervention resulted in an increasing autonomy of ECOWAS – an autonomy that plays against the EU and that it cannot go against to the extent that ‘African ownership’ is a foundational element of its discourse towards Africa. The on going crisis in Guinea-

²²⁸ Even though these liberal political values are not proper to the EU, it is still their most influential representative in West Africa as ECOWAS does not maintain with any other external actor such constant and structured political dialogue.

Bissau since the 12 April 2012 coup d'état is indicative of this feedback effect. This crisis unfolded in this way: following the coup d'état, the EU immediately cut its assistance to Guinea-Bissau where it was deeply involved and had been supporting security sector reform (SSR) since 2008 through its EU SSR Guinea-Bissau mission. ECOWAS first condemned the coup d'état and took sanctions as usual but then decided to support the interim government through its ECOMIB mission.²²⁹ This was strongly criticised by the EU arguing that the conditions for a democratic transition were not met yet. EU officials were shocked that ECOWAS did not align on their position as usual in the political dialogue (EEAS official 2013b; EEAS official 2013c). Conversely, ECOWAS officials asserted that the best way to maintain democracy was to support the interim government in its transition (Nigerian military official 2013; Nigerian ECOWAS military official 2013). They accused the EU of not being driven by the democratic principle but by Portugal's manipulation (Nigerian political ECOWAS official 2013a). The objective for ECOWAS was to assert its primacy in Guinea-Bissau where an Angolan military mission (MISSANG) was present and replace it with an ECOWAS mission. This action was largely promoted by Nigeria and consensually agreed with all other ECOWAS member states (EEAS official 2013b).²³⁰ It is a case of region-building practice with the assertion of ECOWAS as the only actor intervening in West Africa which results from the practice of intervention that developed in the region. ECOWAS member states asserted their primacy to decide what was good for Guinea-Bissau (and for the region) and demanded the alignment of the EU on its positions and the renewal of

²²⁹ The mandate of the ECOMIB is to help secure the political transition process and contribute to the SSR. The mission includes 300 Nigerian military and police personnel, 140 military personnel from Burkina Faso and 120 civilians from Senegal (Réseau de Recherche sur les Opérations de Paix (2014c).

²³⁰ A contact group for Guinea Bissau was created by ECOWAS to deal with the crisis. This group includes Nigeria, Benin, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Senegal and Togo.

cooperation. It also shows Nigeria's use of the legal regional framework instead of acting alone. This first dissenting opinion on a regional crisis demonstrates the growing agency of ECOWAS and a self-awareness as a community – drawing on the EU discourse to legitimise its actions but against the EU position.

2. South America

Mercosur started being used by its member states in the 1990s for political interventions to deal with the different crises in Paraguay. This led to the official adoption of a democratic norm in Mercosur. However, the emergence of an agency for Mercosur in this field was soon diluted by the undifferentiated use of other organisations for political interventions, and the lack of implementation and formalisation of the democratic norm. This evolution will be the object of the first part of this section. We will then examine the prospect for the integration of the armed forces and military intervention through the experience of the South American states' participation to the MINUSTAH in Haiti.

i. From an emerging practice of political intervention...

Mercosur was created a few years after the democratisation of its member states and was considered as one of the ways to anchor their democratic process. The four states were, at this point, still relatively fragile democracies. This was particularly the case with Paraguay, which transitioned to democracy at the very moment of its entrance into Mercosur in 1992.²³¹ It is in this context that Mercosur's first political interventions were undertaken with the aim to impede Paraguay's return to military rule in 1996 and 1999.

These crises were characterised by the deep involvement of the other Mercosur states in their resolution (Flemes and Radseck 2012, 168-169). Some contextual

²³¹ Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay went through their transition to democracy during the mid-1980s.

explanation is necessary to understand these interventions and the role of Mercosur. The 1996 crisis stemmed from a clash between the first civilian President of Paraguay, Wasmosy, and the most powerful military officer, General Oviedo. Wasmosy took refuge at the American embassy and would have resigned without the support of Brazil, the other Mercosur countries, and the US. The first official communiqué on the events was not made by the Paraguayan government but by the US embassy, followed by a speech made by the Brazilian ambassador speaking for Mercosur. Later, the ambassadors of the US, Brazil and Argentina went to Oviedo's headquarters to speak to him. After his refusal they held a press conference in the street and warned that the interruption of democracy would be negatively greeted by the hemisphere, including by the OAS and Mercosur who would isolate and exclude Paraguay if necessary. The following day the foreign ministers of Argentina and Uruguay, along with the deputy foreign minister of Brazil, arrived to support Wasmosy in his confrontation with Oviedo (Valenzuela 1999, 6-14; Dabène 2009, 6).

The 1999 crisis followed on directly from the 1996 crisis. Oviedo managed to obtain the nomination of the Colorado Party for the presidential elections. To avoid his election, Wasmosy and his ally, Argaña, put pressure for a new trial which led to Oviedo receiving a ten years prison sentence. However, Oviedo's ally Raul Cubas won the elections and immediately released Oviedo which triggered massive protest and an impeachment procedure launched by the congressional opposition. The crisis worsened after Argaña's assassination. Mercosur and US pressure again played a key role in the resolution of the crisis. Brazil and Argentina publicly threatened Paraguay with its expulsion from Mercosur. Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardosos personally convinced Cubas to leave office and come to exile in Brazil, while Oviedo left in exile to Argentina (Van der Vleuten and Ribeiro Hoffman 2010, 749).

In both cases, the Mercosur countries were key to the stepping back of Oviedo. They got deeply involved in the internal affairs of Paraguay, followed step by step the events and directly engaged with the political actors while threatening them with Paraguay's exclusion from Mercosur. Interestingly, Brazil was careful to speak in the name of Mercosur, justifying its involvement by their membership in the organisation even though, at this point, there was no democratic norm in the official documents. These crises and Mercosur intervention actually led to the formal adoption of a democratic norm with the Ushuaia Protocol on Democratic Commitment (Mercosur 1998). These actions by Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay in the name of Mercosur were unusual for countries with a strong tradition of non-interference in domestic affairs and respect of sovereignty. This suggests it was made possible by the emergence of the 'securitisation of integration' discourse analysed in chapter five. Regional integration was represented as necessary to the future prosperity of the Mercosur countries also because it could guarantee the rooting of the democratic process in the region. In Brazil, the shift in the official discourse at this moment, depicting Mercosur as a necessary 'destiny' for Brazil, framed the government's response to these crises. To this favourable context for regional intervention was added the role of external actors such as the US, who put constant pressure on Paraguayan political actors, but also on Mercosur's member states, to take a stance and get involved in the resolution of the crises.²³² The EU also had an influence on both crises through the preparations for the negotiation of an Association Agreement with Mercosur, which depended on the respect of the democratic principle.²³³ The EU's discourse and practices through its political dialogue, and a clear stance that they would not

²³² At the very beginning of the crisis, the US State Department instructed its embassies in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile to contact the governments of these countries to share its concern (Valenzuela 1999, 6).

²³³ Already in 1995 an agreement was signed between Mercosur and the EU which grounded their cooperation in the respect for democratic principles (EC-Mercosur 1995).

negotiate with Mercosur in case of a break of Paraguay's democratic order, also contributed to framing and encouraging the intervention of Mercosur countries (Valenzuela 1999, 12; Dabène 2009, 6; Van der Vleuten and Ribeiro Hoffman 2010, 749).

However, this emergence of a Mercosur political intervention practice on the basis of a democratic norm did not take root. On the one hand, the lack of formalisation and further implementation of the democratic norm did not provide for clear grounds for intervention. On the other hand, the incipient agency of Mercosur became diluted through the increasing use of less institutionalised forums, such as Unasur, to mediate and resolve regional crises. As was mentioned earlier, the 1996 Paraguayan crisis led to the adoption of the Ushuaia Protocol (Mercosur 1998a) which plans for consultations in case of a 'rupture of the democratic order' and for measures 'from the suspension of the right to participate to the different organs of the respective processes of integration, until the suspension of the rights and obligations stemming from these processes.' This rather vague commitment was much later complemented by Ushuaia II (Mercosur 2011) which provides an additional definition of the norm: 'in case of the rupture or threat to the democratic order, a violation of the constitutional order or of any situation that puts at risk the legitimate exercise of power and the permanence of democratic values and principles'; and further measures to handle the crisis such as the closure of borders, the suspension or restriction of trade, communication, energy provisions, etc. It also plans for the support and assistance to the state concerned provided that it gives its consent and that its sovereignty and territorial integrity is respected during the whole process. Hence, while Ushuaia II formalises further the democratic norm, it clearly limits the intervention to the consent of the state and the unrestricted respect of its sovereignty

which was not stated in the Ushuaia Protocol. Finally, neither of the texts defines what is a ‘rupture or threat to the democratic order’ which can be interpreted in many ways (Brazilian diplomat 2012a). Is the democratic order equal to formal elections? Does it include respect for human rights, the freedom of speech or some particular constitutional principle?

As was explained in chapter five, the democratic norm of Mercosur is a point of encounter of the two official regional discourses with one placing sovereignty above democracy (‘unity in diversity’) and the other one putting first the democratic principle (‘securitisation of integration’). It created two different registers for practices. On the one hand, the ‘securitisation of integration’ discourse produced the possibility for the interventions in Paraguay which showed an important involvement of Mercosur in the internal affairs of the country. The practices of the Parliament of the Mercosur are also framed by this discourse. Its condemnation of Venezuela for not renewing the licences of more than thirty radio channels that were critical towards governmental policies, calling it ‘an open violation of freedom of expression,’ and demanding ‘the full respect of freedom of expression and the press,’ demonstrates its interpretation of the democratic norm as enabling interference in the internal affairs of the member states (Parliament of the Mercosur 2009d).

On the other hand, the other register for practice that places sovereignty above democracy (drawing on the ‘unity in diversity’ discourse) has been increasingly put-in-use in these past years. Venezuela is again an insightful illustration, which shows the competition between the two different discourses. Its final adhesion process to Mercosur was rather controversial: even though the Paraguayan Congress, concerned with the democratic credentials of the Chavez government in Venezuela, was still refusing to ratify its membership treaty, the other member states used the 2012

constitutional crisis in Paraguay to suspend the country and make the membership of Venezuela official in spite of the general criticism towards the government's repression of the political opposition.²³⁴ More recently in 2014, confronted with the mass protests and the repression of the Maduro administration in Venezuela, South American states decided to use Unasur to take action.²³⁵ However, instead of condemning the Venezuelan government, they decided to send a delegation to support the peace process supposedly led by Maduro in the context of repression, arrest of political opponents and harsh restriction on the freedom of speech (Trinkunas 2014). These cases demonstrate a clear domination of the 'unity in diversity' discourse in these past years favouring the sovereignty principle as prevailing over the democratic norm.

This last case involving Unasur also highlights a shift from the development of a Mercosur agency to deal with regional crises in the 1990s to a decrease in its pro-activity. For example, the constitutional crisis in Bolivia in 2003 only triggered a joint communiqué demanding the resolution of the crisis and the respect of the democratic norm (Fuentes 2005, 7).²³⁶ The diplomatic crisis between Ecuador and Colombia in 2008 following the Colombian military's incursion into Ecuadorian territory in pursuit of a group of FARC militants was not resolved within Mercosur either, even though both Ecuador and Colombia have been associate members since 2008. The

²³⁴ On the 21st and 22nd of June 2012, President Fernando Lugo of Paraguay was impeached by a large majority of the Congress for 'bad performance of his function' as stated in the art. 225 of the Paraguayan Constitution. Lugo had less than 24 hours to prepare his defence (Vidigal 2013, 37). As a result, on June 24, Paraguay was excluded from Mercosur without even the discussions with local political actors planned for in the Protocols. The Brazilians officials interviewed seemed very uneasy with this decision and acknowledged that the situation was not very clear legally (adviser to the Minister of Defence 2011; Brazilian diplomat 2012a).

²³⁵ Unasur adopted a commitment similar to Ushuaia II in 2010 (Unasur 2010).

²³⁶ The Bolivian crisis or 'Bolivian gas war' started in October 2003 with the resignation of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada following strikes by indigenous and labour groups fuelled by discontent with the government policies concerning natural gas and coca eradication. The violent military responses of the Bolivian armed forces against the strikes led to the death of 60 people.

Rio Group,²³⁷ the least institutionalised political forum in Latin America, was preferred to mediate the crisis. Since Unasur was officially created, it became the main forum for resolving regional crises.²³⁸ It intervened in the Bolivian crisis in 2008,²³⁹ in the coup d'état attempt in Ecuador in 2010²⁴⁰ and in the 2012 Paraguayan crisis. All these crises, concerning full members or associate members of Mercosur, could have been addressed within the Mercosur framework as the most institutionalised organisation in the region. It is not by chance that Unasur has been chosen instead. Brazil uses it as a non-constraining forum of dialogue to deal regionally with regional crises. It has more room for manoeuvre than in Mercosur for *ad hoc* responses limited to the strict respect of the sovereignty principle. It is also less prone to the influence of other actors such as the US or the EU.²⁴¹ The last crisis in Paraguay is revealing. Brazil refused to address the crisis through Mercosur, even though Paraguay is a full member; it preferred instead to deal with the crisis within Unasur through consultations with all the other South American Presidents (Adviser to the Minister of Defence 2011). An EEAS official (2014b) testified that the EU tried to engage Brazil to react through Mercosur to consolidate its role in the region – showing the continuous engagement of the EU in the promotion of Mercosur agency – but it was met by Brazil's refusal. Eventually, the choice was thus to consolidate

²³⁷ The Rio Group was created in 1986 and includes 24 Latin American and Caribbean states. In 2010, it merged into the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

²³⁸ Electoral assistance missions are as well shifting from Mercosur to Unasur. It also has to be noted that, contrarily to ECOWAS, these missions are not automatic; they have to be requested by the member states.

²³⁹ In 2008, the Bolivian province of Santa Cruz declared autonomy in a contested referendum while 3 other provinces entered in rebellion against the Morales administration. The violent clashes between the government supporters and the protesters led to an Unasur emergency meeting and a joint declaration where the member states stated they would not tolerate a threat to Bolivia's territorial integrity (Unasur 2008).

²⁴⁰ In 2010, a faction of the Ecuadorian police kidnapped President Rafael Correa in an attempt to overthrow its government. Unasur held an emergency meeting denouncing the attempt and expressing support to the Ecuadorian government.

²⁴¹ This was emphasised by a high level diplomat from the Itamaraty (Brazilian diplomat 2012a).

Unasur and the underlying ‘unity in diversity’ discourse constituting integration as a cohabitation between sovereign states instead of strengthening Mercosur’s agency.

This shift greatly contrasts with the regionalisation process in West Africa where the agency of ECOWAS is strengthened through multiple interventions on the basis of regionally agreed norms relating to democracy. In South America the dynamic of the regionalisation process shows a dilution of Mercosur’s agency in favour of the use of Unasur as a weakly institutionalised forum for which interventions depend on presidential consensus restricted by the principle of sovereignty. This path prevents the emergence of an actual practice of political intervention in South America.

ii. ...to military intervention?

The MINUSTAH mission in Haiti is usually presented as the first South American mission, as mentioned earlier, with the potential to trigger an integration of the armed forces, and thus opening the way for regional military interventions inside or outside of the region. This part will examine if this long-term joint intervention produced particular practices furthering such a process.

First, the discursive practices of the key South American states justifying their participation to the mission are good indicators of their expectations and frame the possible new practices potentially emerging from their involvement in the mission. In Argentina, the debate and the decision to participate were difficult because, on the one hand, the Chapter VII mandate of the mission authorised the use of force;²⁴² and, on the other hand, the MINUSTAH followed the US/French intervention that forced president Aristide into exile which was depicted as another instance of American imperialism (Follietti 2005, 45-46). The decisive argument that enabled a positive vote at the Congress was the presentation of the mission as an opportunity to coordinate

²⁴² This authorisation of the use of force does not fit well with the South American tradition of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

positions within Mercosur and deepen regional integration (Cardoso 2004). Member of Parliament, Nilda Garré (Minister of defence from 2005) declared in a session of the Parliament that the MINUSTAH is:

‘a way to deepen integration links in the region, to stimulate trust and to develop a gradual common effort, eventually leading to the construction of a regional defence system, enabling the use of resources in a much more institutionalised way to face situations of violence or interference of extra-regional powers.’ (quoted in Follietti 2005, 45)

The Argentine President, Nestor Kirchner, described the participation of Argentina, Brazil and Chile in MINUSTAH as the ‘embryo of a common regional defence system’ (quoted in Flandes 2005, 22). His minister of defence added that while Mercosur did not have a military arm yet, this deployment was one step towards defence integration (Flandes 2005, 22). The argument was similar in Chile and asserted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Alvarez during a Senate session, and by the Minister of Defence (now President) Michelle Bachelet claiming that ‘the conformation of forces with neighbouring countries comes as a support of our insertion in the region and towards a good relation with our neighbouring countries and friends’ (quoted in Llenderrozas 2006). In Uruguay the regional factor also seemed to have been dominant (Zurbriggen 2005, 105). These debates contrast greatly with the Brazilian debate where the regional factor played a role but where MINUSTAH was not usually presented as a way to deepen regional integration but was rather seen as a legitimisation of Brazilian leadership (Flandes 2005, 23).²⁴³ It was argued that this was an opportunity that Brazil could not miss in its quest for a UNSC permanent seat at a moment when it publicly announced its aspiration to this seat and

²⁴³ Paradoxically, it was in Brazil, the state that has the commandment of the mission, that the opposition was the strongest, in the Congress and in civil society. Both the role of the US and the Chapter VII mandate of the mission were criticised (Gauthier and Souza 2006, 3-4). Actually, Brazilian diplomats still have a difficulty to accept that the MINUSTAH is a Chapter VII mission involving enforcement, which goes against the non intervention tradition of Brazil (Sotomayor Velazques 2010, 636).

joined Germany, Japan and India in a diplomatic campaign to achieve this goal (Sotomayor Velazques 2010, 632). A Brazilian diplomat (2012a) interviewed insisted on the lack of reflection on Brazil's actual participation, and which was thought only as a way to get into the UNSC: 'So we accepted saying well if we go to Haiti, we'll easily get into the UNSC, it was done in 2004, quickly decided in two months, April, May, in June 2004 we go there and then we see.' Thus, while Argentina, Chile and Uruguay had the integration of the armed forces in mind when they decided to participate in MINUSTAH, Brazil's incentive was the promotion of its global ambitions.

I argue that while this extended participation in the same mission, from 2004 and still on going today, did drastically increase interactions and triggered a socialisation process between the armed forces and diplomacies of the region, it has not lead to an integration of the armed forces, and neither to opening the way for possible future regional military interventions (inside or outside of the region). This process is framed by the dominant Brazilian discourse which considerably limits the possibility of integration as we will see.

Many analysts and scholars claim that the MINUSTAH could be the foundation of defence integration in South America because of this socialisation process. For example, Kenkel (2010, 587), Hirst and Llenderrozas (2008, 2) and Lengyel (2006, 9) show how the work effected in common on the ground by the armed forces, as well as the coordination of the defence and foreign ministries of the Latin American countries involved in the MINUSTAH through the Mechanism 2x9,²⁴⁴ improved trust and cooperation in the region. This was also highlighted in my interviews (Brazilian

²⁴⁴ The Mechanism 2x9 is a consultative group on Haiti used to coordinate political, military and cooperation strategies in Haiti. It started in May 2005 as 2x4 with Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. It became then 2x7 with Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru. Finally, in 2007, Bolivia and Paraguay joined the mechanism.

colonel 2012b; Brazilian General 2012a). According to an adviser to the Brazilian Ministry of Defence (2011) who spent some time in Haiti, this cooperation between the armed forces and the diplomatic services of South American countries took on a new level with the MINUSTAH: 'They established a regular consultation each week, each 15 days. They come together in a meeting to discuss, share information, say what their intentions are, build scenarios together. This is an extraordinary level of integration.' This politico-military coordination was also furthered by the fact that high-ranking military and political posts within the MINUSTAH were in the majority given to South American officials²⁴⁵ (Kenkel 2010, 589). Argentina, Brazil and Chile also set up a coordination mechanism through the ABC group enabling a constant informal dialogue between their ministries of defence and of foreign affairs. However, what is noticeable as well is the fragmentary character of this coordination through multiple consultative groups such as the Mechanism 2x9, the ABC group, but also contributions from the OAS and the Rio Group (Hirst and Llenderozas 2008, 11). Mercosur, the most institutionalised grouping of the region that has all its states participating in MINUSTAH, was not involved in the coordination. It even appears that, initially, the UN asked Mercosur to send troops as a regional bloc, which was refused by the member states (Osava 2004). The choice was thus made to have a weakly institutionalised dialogue using multiple forums and to avoid the use of Mercosur as a framework for coordination and cooperation.

The joint participation within MINUSTAH had some outcomes in terms of integration, but not at the regional level and not including Brazil. One of these outcomes was the creation of a bi-national force, the *Cruz del Sur*, between Chile and Argentina which was to be placed under a UN Standby Arrangement in 2006

²⁴⁵ Also, unusually for a UN mission, Brazil kept the military command of the mission during the entire time up until today. This participated to the MINUSTAH being seen as a South American mission.

(Letelier Pardo 2007, 311; Kenkel 2010, 588). *Cruz del Sur* even has a bi-national political direction and a Joint Staff that manages its peace operations (Oelsner 2011, 202).²⁴⁶ The self-exclusion of Brazil is highlighted by Mathias, Guzzi and Giannini (2008, 8), who claim that Chile vetoed the participation of Brazil in the military exercises conducted in the frame of this agreement, because it accused Brazil of trying to promote actions hindering initiatives aiming to deepen defence cooperation. The interviews conducted show again the two discourses at play in Brazil in particular in the Ministry of Defence. Some, for example, such as this Brazilian colonel, deplored the lack of initiative of Brazil in this field (Brazilian colonel 2012b):

‘Argentina and Chile have tried to come closer together, almost a fusion. The coming together is much better, Brazil learned a lot in this field. We have problems of relations, that make things a bit difficult (...). Chile and Argentina on the military point of view are much better;’

In contrast, others, such as this adviser to the Minister of Defence (2011), place strict limits to the possibility of regional military interventions:

‘We participated in Haiti because it’s a mission within the UN framework. Argentina and Chile for example are much less stricter with that. (...). We do not consider for example, an African Union or NATO operation as a peace operation. It’s something else. We make this very clear distinction between what is authorised by the UN and is thus considered as legitimate by the international community, and what is not authorised by the UN and which are understandable decisions from alliance or groups of countries. But it comes from this vision, from this respect of sovereignty. (...). There is no blurriness in the principle of non intervention.’

He added that:

‘There is the idea that we should think about a common defence policy. But there is more enthusiasm from Argentinians mostly to build something quickly. Brazil is more prudent (...).’

²⁴⁶ In October 2008, Peru and Argentina also created a bi-national company of military engineers, known as *Libertador Don Jose de San Martin* that started operating in the MINUSTAH (de Souza Neto 2013, 76).

The socialisation within the MINUSTAH did play a role for Brazil but it was framed by the dominant discourse placing autonomy and sovereignty at the core of Brazil's foreign policy. In this discourse, defence integration and the possibility of intervention it entails threatens the sovereignty principle to the extent that it has the potential to blur the lines between security and defence through new practices of security on the ground. Hence, at the regional level, the participation in MINUSTAH, instead of furthering the integration of armed forces, led to the creation of the South American Defence Council (CDS)²⁴⁷ as a forum of cooperation between strictly sovereign states restricting any possibility of intervention within or outside of the region.²⁴⁸

Conclusion

To conclude, the analysis of these two case studies showed the different paths taken by the regionalisation process in the two regions. In West Africa, the encounter between the EU and Nigeria enabled a drastic shift in the region: from a defensive anti-Western stance focused on regime survival until the 1990s; to a regional community permeated and supported by the international community, in particular the EU, in less than twenty years. The practices that emerged to deal with transnational security issues and political and security crises highlight a self-reinforcing process of integration leading to the construction of a supranational regional community based on consensually agreed regional norms. In South America, conversely, traces of such a process could be found in the 1990s within the Mercosur

²⁴⁷ In an interview conducted in a previous research, a Brazilian diplomat (2009) asserted that the creation of the CDS was a direct outcome of the participation of South American countries to the MINUSTAH.

²⁴⁸ Illustrating this Brazilian refusal of defence integration and possible intervention was this information given by an EEAS official (2014b): while the EU and Chile signed a Framework Agreement enabling Chilean troops to participate to EU crisis management mission, and Argentina was interested by a similar agreement; Brazil immediately declined the offer.

framework with the development of institutionalised regional practices to deal with transnational security issues and the interventions in Paraguay. However, this incipient agency of Mercosur was then diluted through the use of the South American framework (out of reach of the influence of external actors such as the US and the EU) as an umbrella for bilateral cooperation and restricting intervention to the strict respect of the sovereignty principle. Regionalisation took the form of the cohabitation of sovereign units cooperating according to their shifting interest.

The comparison between the two regions shows the interplay between the discourse and practices of the different actors struggling to define the meaning and form of the regionalisation process. On the one side, it demonstrates the limits of a one-dimensional interest-based analysis inasmuch as the actors' interests in the regionalisation process are deeply framed by their dominant discourse. An interest-based approach could not explain, for instance, why a regional power such as Nigeria would accept supranationality; or why Brazil would hinder regional security cooperation in such a way while transnational security issues such as drug trafficking and organised crime are major issues for the country. The different answers to similar transnational security issues in the two regions illustrate this complexity. On the other side, it also confirms that the neo-functionalist spill over process is not self-sustaining – it can unfold but has to be supported by the relevant actors' discourses and practices, such as those of Nigeria and the EU in the case of West Africa. In South America, the emergence of institutionalised practices in the 1990s did not lead to any spill over which was hindered by Brazil's reluctance.

Finally, once established these practices contribute to (re)produce the dominant discourses at play: the 'securitisation of community' discourse in West Africa and the 'unity in diversity' discourse in South America. However, other actors can try to

destabilise these dominant discourses and impose their own meaning on the region – which is the case of the US, the EU but also of other South American states in South America trying to challenge Brazil's representation of regional integration, security and defence. There are also cases of adaptation of practices to local events that feed back into the discourse and contribute to transform its elements. The practice of intervention in West Africa, framed by the EU discourse, led to a strengthening of ECOWAS's agency which fed back into the discourse to produce a more assertive stance towards the EU and contributing, thereby, to the building of a regional community. In South America the intervention in Haiti, where Brazilian armed forces were exposed to new security practices, contributed to destabilise the separation between security and defence central to the dominant Brazilian discourse.

Conclusion

The process of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies, its conditions of emergence and evolution, is the core object of study of this doctoral thesis. This research had two aims, first it sought to construct a new framework to understand and conceptualise regionalisation processes and second, applying this framework to draw conclusions on the paths these processes take in West Africa and South America. As part of the methodological approach, it uses the comparison between the two regions to shed light on the shortcomings of the IR literature on regional projects and to support key empirical findings on regionalisation processes.

On the one hand, it showed that the representations of the relevant actors constitute the process by giving meaning to the factors that are wrongly objectified by the IR literature; and, on the other hand, that regions and regional projects are not independent processes or self-contained units of inquiry, but are embedded within international discursive structures that also constitute the conditions of possibility for regionalisation processes. Regionalisation is thus conceptualised as the encounter between the discourses and practices of actors situated ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the regions.

This conclusion first lays out the key elements of the theoretical framework elaborated in this dissertation. Second, it presents, in the light of the theoretical framework developed, the main empirical findings on the regionalisation processes in West Africa and South America. Third and finally, it reflects on the insights drawn from these findings on the processes of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies in general.

A discourses and practices approach to the regionalisation of foreign and security policies: an alternative to the IR literature on regional projects

The general literature review in the first chapter and the fourth chapter on the International Relations literature on South America and West Africa addressed the weaknesses of IR approaches to regions, focusing in particular on the literature concerning the political and security dimensions of regional projects. The first chapter reviewed the IR literature from the first attempts at explaining regional integration with Classical Integration Theories, which includes intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism, to the more recent literatures such as the New Regionalism Approach or Regional Security Complex Theory.

The rationale guiding the review of these various literatures from the most positivist to more constructivist approaches aimed to problematise their treatment of the ‘factors’ causing regionalisation. The discussion shows that, in spite of increasingly taking into account ideational factors such as identities, cultural factors or shifting interests (which neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism do not do),²⁴⁹ even the more constructivist approaches maintain a dichotomy between material and ideational factors objectified as having a direct causal effect. These factors supposedly provide complementary or alternative causal explanations to be assessed when studying the evolution of regional projects.

One of the issues, highlighted in the review, and related to the objectification of ideational factors, is the essentialisation of identity as a property of the state and used as an independent factor, which explains the success or failure of regional projects. Thus, for instance, a foundational assumption of the Security Communities and

²⁴⁹ Classical Integration Theory is characterised, I argued, by their conceptualisation of states’ identity and interests as uniform: whereas for intergovernmentalist states’ identity and interests are exogenous to the regional integration process (whether given or domestically negotiated); for neofunctionalists the identity and interests of the states shift equally through the process towards a regional identity.

Regional Security Complexes literatures implies that the more of an identity states share in common through similar historical experiences or through shared cultural background, the easier it should be to develop a regional identity or community. Alternatively, identity is also conceptualised as the outcome (the dependent variable) of the process studied: regional identity in this case is the end point of the process, and should be measured to assess the emergence of a regional community. In both cases identity is objectified, either as a factor explaining the process or as an outcome to be explained by other factors.

As emphasised in the review, the complexity of identity formation as a site of struggle and contestation between contrasting interpretations and representations of the Self, the Other and ‘facts’ is thus overlooked. The construction of a political subject’s identity is always part of a political project trying to impose the dominant, ‘natural,’ and ‘necessary’ (self-) representation, that actually has no essential character (Hansen 2006, 5; Paasi 2009b, 133; Waever 2002, 22). Criticising Wendt’s constructivism, Zehfuss (2001, 338) argues pertinently that:

‘identities as they are defined in discourse fail to be logically bounded entities. Identities are continuously articulated, rearticulated and contested, which make them hard to pin down as explanatory categories. The stories we tell about ourselves are, (...), not necessarily coherent.’

Consequently, I take that, and this is a building stone of the theoretical framework developed, a more appropriate view of regional identity should be as a site of contestation where actors struggle to provide their own meaning and definition of the regional project with the objective to make it coherent with their own ever-contested national identity. While constructivists argue that identities can change through interaction, they still consider them as relatively stable – their account of regionalisation cannot therefore place identity at the centre of this political process.

This is highlighted again by Zehfuss (2001, 327): ‘How either the actors or the ideas about self and other are constituted in the first place is not part of the account.’

Maintaining a dichotomy between material and ideational factors is usually the approach adopted in mainstream constructivist empirical analyses. It assumes that while social reality is constructed (but stable), the material world can also have an independent and thus non-mediated effect on social phenomena. The theoretical frameworks elaborated on the basis of these assumptions analyse regional projects (regionalism/regionalisation for the NRA, regional security complex for the RSC and security community for the SC) as the outcome of a set of material and ideational factors. The main shortcoming of these frameworks, as shown in chapter one, is their deterministic tendency asserting that when a particular set of factors is present and interacts – such as security issues, economic interdependence, globalisation, collective identity, and so on – the states belonging to the same region will have the incentive to adopt a similar and ‘rational’ response which is to deal with these factors or issues at the regional level. Conversely, other factors would hinder the regionalisation process such as weak national institutions or the cultural heterogeneity of the states.

Through the comparison between the IR literature on regional projects in West Africa and South America in chapter four, I clearly showed how a focus on material and ideational factors led to weak and contradictory explanations within the IR literature on each of the regions and across the two literatures. For instance, the argument that strong national institutions are necessary for the creation and successful development of regional projects does not hold in light of the empirical evidence in the two regions: whereas in West Africa – composed mostly of weak and fragile states – ECOWAS is developing towards a regional political community,

regionalisation in South America – which include relatively strong states – remains limited to lowly institutionalised cooperation. So-called transnational security issues prevalent in both regions (drug trafficking, organised crime, terrorism, etc.), and supposedly leading to further regionalisation, fail clearly to account for this difference between both processes. Similarly, ideational factors such as identities and cultural and historical background strikingly provide a basis for opposing accounts of the process in West Africa and South America: some scholars emphasise their heterogeneity while others highlight their commonality. This diversity of views underpins the argument that, far from a stable social fact, identities are in constant process of negotiation. They constitute interpretations of ‘facts’ used to support self-representations and can be subjected to contradictory accounts depending on the purpose of the actors or analysts. Those contrasting claims from the IR literatures are thus, themselves, alternative interpretations of these ideational factors which support different arguments. However, as shown, they are of very little use to grasp the regionalisation process.

The contradictory conclusions of these literatures are not surprising. They rely on the (sometimes implicit) assumption that states, even if not considered as like units with exogenous identity and interests as neo-realists or neo-liberals would put it, are somehow ‘rational’ in how they would respond to the ‘factors’ of regionalisation. These factors are postulated as necessary or sufficient conditions to the process; and regionalisation is considered the ‘rational’ answer to a range of issues. The hypothesis of some kind of ‘corporate identity’ for states as Wendt (1999, 233-234) would argue underlays these explanations where states share an identity that defines their fundamental interests which would be fulfilled in the same way; in this case through regionalisation. The causality links, a sort of black box approach, established between

the ‘factors’ and the outcome of regionalisation do not enable us to understand the complexity driving these social processes. While these ‘factors’ are constitutive of a certain context, they have no meaning and therefore do not produce any effect on themselves, outside of the representations of the actors. Hence, and this is a key insight, what gets lost in this type of analysis, is the meaning these factors have for the various actors and institutions involved; meanings that arise out of complex historical processes and the particular ways in which the actors represent their own identity and the region. That is, IR frameworks neglect at the same time the social structures which condition the actors’ representations, as well as the agency of the actors in the process. Indeed, these approaches’ lack of political dimension hide how the actors of regionalisation process interpret and constitute the ‘facts’, ‘factors’, or ‘events’ in support of their political project for the region.

The IR literature on regional projects gives a certain deal of attention to some actors of the process of regionalisation such as regional powers and large international actors. However it does so by conceptualising them as additional objective factors having a causal effect on the process. Effects can be seen as negative (the international community in West Africa) or positive (the US in South America) in respect of the evolution of regionalisation.

In the case of regional powers, depending on their conceptualisation of power (as shown in the last section of chapter one when reviewing the literature on hegemony and regional leadership), the role of Brazil and Nigeria can be presented as promoting the process or constraining it. Beyond their deterministic conclusions and limited explanations of the empirical developments in both regions, I have stressed that these approaches neglect to focus on key questions and processes: How do the actors’ self-representations and their representations of the region contribute to constituting the

regionalisation process? To which extent do they define the conditions of emergence of this process, its form and path? For which political purpose?

The international community is considered in the literature on West Africa to be an objective factor negatively influencing the process by imposing its priorities and goals on the region. This indicates a rather limited awareness of the extent of the role of 'external' actors in constituting the conditions of possibility for the regional projects. I outline, in the analysis carried out in chapters six and seven, the scope of this role by giving an extensive account of how the EU performs ECOWAS by framing the conditions of the regionalisation process according to its own self-representations, thus highlighting how crucial this dimension can be.

Hence, while the factors frequently employed in the IR literature do of course matter in regionalisation processes, a more thorough explanation requires an account of the ways in which these factors are themselves constituted, maintained and shaped by discourses and power relations between the relevant actors, as well as through the practices the actors deploy.

The theoretical framework developed in this dissertation thus builds on the Region Building Approach (RBA) developed in critical geography which precisely focuses on the discourses and practices of actors that actually make the region what it is, including their seemingly objective features. It also builds on the Nation-Building literature and Poststructuralism with their focus on political discourses, identity-formation and power relations. The RBA asks why and how a region is brought into existence, by whom and for what, rather than taking it as a feature of objective reality (Neumann 1994, 53; Paasi 2001, 16). It sees objective and ideational factors as being mediated by discourses and practices, emphasising the agency of 'region-builders' located both 'inside' and 'outside' the region.

While the RBA's conceptualisation of regions was adopted as a starting point of the theoretical framework developed, it also relies on two other literatures. On the one hand, the poststructuralist IR literature on foreign policy and security was particularly useful for the dimension of regionalisation (the foreign policy and security domain) studied in this project. In particular, Hansen's (2006, xvii) account of foreign policy and identity as co-constituted through discourse shows pointedly how foreign policy and identity are in a continuous process of narrative adjustment to justify foreign policy choices through an interpretation of 'facts' and the constant (re)production of identities. It provides a bridging response to the dichotomy maintained in constructivist approaches between material and ideational factors by making the claim that both types of factors are closely intertwined through discourses which mediate and process them. Put in other words by Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 108): 'the linguistic and non linguistic elements are not merely juxtaposed, but constitute a differential and structured system of position – that is, a discourse.' Discourse is a structure of meaning including norms and conventions that guide our behaviour and attribute identities to objects and subjects. It is thus performative (Gregory 1989, xx; Shapiro 1981, 20; Waever 2002, 23-24). On the other hand, the theoretical framework draws on the 'practice turn,' recently developed in IR (Balzacq 2011; Neumann 2002, 627-628; Pouliot 2008, 279). It provides a much-needed focus on social practices²⁵⁰ which shed light on how discourses are diffused and (re)produced by actors; and how they can be transformed – thereby answering key questions such as: how do discourses empirically translate into practices? How are they (re)produced? How are norms carried by discourses transferred from one actor/region to another through specific practices?

²⁵⁰ Keeping in mind that the distinction between discursive and social practices is a heuristic distinction made to empirically analyse the regionalisation process. Both discursive and social practices are ontologically discursive.

Drawing on these different but complementary approaches, I envision the processes of regionalisation as resulting from the interplay between the discourses and practices of actors 'inside' and 'outside' the region. Discourses carry concepts, norms and (re)produce the regional identities that enable regional practices to take place, as well as the other way around; i.e. specific practices enabling the (re)production of regional identities, concepts and norms. These practices, I argued, can take the form of consultations between politicians, diplomats or militaries, regional interventions, joint border monitoring, common positions in international forums, etc. Through these practices, actors are socialised to regional discourses and (re)produce the regional identity. However, regional actors also adapt and create new forms of practices to respond to their context. These practices can then transform the regional discourse and identity through a feedback effect.

My theoretical framework, then, takes into account the more structural historical dimension of the process, by means of a historical analysis of discourse formation, while recognising the way in which relevant agents continue to frame and modify the regionalisation process via their social practices. It also focuses on the study of the encounters between the discourses and practices of actors 'inside' and 'outside' the region: the tensions, convergences and divergences that constitute the regionalisation process.

To carry out the empirical analysis I devised, in chapter three, a twofold methodology relying on a poststructuralist discourse analysis and an interpretative process tracing. The first dimension consists in analysing the discourses, making sense of the representations of the actors, and categorising them into 'basic discourses' in the way suggested by Hansen (2006). The second step aims at tracing how these 'basic discourses' enable or restrict certain regional practices. Applying

this methodology I have been able to show in chapters five, six and seven why particular practices can be put to effect in one context rather than another, how regional and ‘external’ actors diffuse and (re)produce their norms through their discourses and practices, and for which reasons they end up succeeding or failing.

Further, following the RBA’s emphasis on power, the most influential actors were chosen to carry out in-depth analysis of their discourses and practices, and their impact on the regionalisation process. These actors are the regional powers (Nigeria and Brazil), the regional institutions (ECOWAS, Unasur and Mercosur), and a number of ‘external’ actors (the EU, the US and the OAS). Even though questionable, this choice seemed the most appropriate considering the time frame of this research project. I examined in particular the articulations of the concepts of region and state/nation in the discourses of these actors – drawing on Waever’s (2002) study of Nordic states in the EU – within a larger web of articulations including concepts such as ‘security,’ ‘community,’ ‘autonomy’ and so on.

Empirical findings: the regionalisation of foreign and security policies in West Africa and South America

The theoretical and methodological framework of this dissertation, was used in chapters five, six and seven to analyse the processes in West Africa and South America. The comparative approach was essential to both clarifying the path taken by regionalisation in the two regions, and to draw some general conclusions on the processes of regionalisation of foreign and security policies which will be further detailed in the third and last part of this conclusion. The rationale driving the empirical analysis was to first analyse the official regional discourses produced by ECOWAS in West Africa, and Mercosur and Unasur in South America; and then show how they were constituted by encounters between regional and ‘external’

actors. Chapter seven finally illustrated how these discourses frame, and are (re)produced through, the practices of regionalisation of foreign and security policies.

The analysis of ECOWAS's official discourse highlighted the predominance of a hegemonic 'securitisation of community' discourse since the mid-1990s – occasionally challenged by a more defensive and outward looking 'defensive integration' discourse that emerged with the creation of ECOWAS in the mid 1970s. The hegemonic discourse relies on the articulation of a community and of a securitisation element mutually reinforcing each other to produce the representation of the building of a regional community – around regional norms and supranationality – as necessary to the survival, and the security and development of West African states.

Chapter six established that the discursive encounter between Nigeria and the EU converged to produce this hegemonic discourse and performed ECOWAS as a regional security actor driving the emergence of a regional political community. It does so in two ways: on the one hand, the EU's discourse on regional integration and security as the main path to peace and security converges with Nigeria's national/regional security nexus; it also acknowledges ECOWAS as the only legitimate actor to intervene in West Africa in security matters. This is a central objective of Nigeria's foreign policy following its sense of vulnerability, and its reticence towards the interference of extra-regional actors. Moreover, the EU's discourse promotes Nigeria as the driving force and leader of ECOWAS which converges with Nigeria's discourse on its leadership and responsibility in West Africa. Hence, this increased involvement from the EU in the late 1990s together with the democratisation of Nigeria in 1999 – enabling a new concept of security to emerge beyond the more traditional concept of regime survival – explain the drastic

shift in the region: from a defensive anti-Western stance focused on regime survival until the 1990s, to a regional community permeated and supported by the international community – and (re)producing the international community discourse on regions and security – in less than twenty years. This encounter between the EU and Nigeria and the receptivity of ECOWAS to this partnership with a ‘sister’ organisation, in addition to the EU’s financial and technical resources – in light of ECOWAS’s weaknesses and lack of resources – enable various practices from the EU to perform ECOWAS as a regional security actor on the basis of its own security norms and self-representation.

The study of the regional practices of regional intervention and management of transnational security issues in chapter seven then showed how Nigeria and the EU’s discourses made possible a range of practices that led to a self-reinforcing process of integration towards the construction of a supranational regional community. Indeed, they opened the possibility for a regionalisation of foreign and security policies including the elaboration of regional plans and strategies, institutionalised dialogue, the launching of regional interventions (including without the consent of the concerned member state), and an incipient normative regional order binding to the member states. The EU’s discursive and social practices – in particular the pressure exerted through its political dialogue to foster a practice of intervention, and the framing of ECOWAS’s key security texts – was crucial in this transformation. At the same time, these newly developed regional practices contribute, through instances of dialogue, networks established across the region, joint actions, etc., to (re)produce the hegemonic ‘securitisation of community’ discourse. West African officials are socialised to this discourse which carries a representation of the regional level as the appropriate level of action, and ECOWAS as the legitimate actor to intervene in West

African peace and security – the region is thereby becoming part of the representation these officials have of their own identity. However, this convergence does not prevent struggles between the main actors trying to assert their definition of the regional project as illustrated by the case of the Guinea-Bissau crisis: the practice of intervention in West Africa, framed by the EU discourse, led to a strengthening of ECOWAS's agency and autonomy which fed back into the discourse to produce a more assertive stance against the EU.

The situation in South America is, relatively speaking, more complex than in West Africa: two discourses overlap and compete against each other in both Mercosur and Unasur. The dominant one, clearly hegemonic in Unasur, promotes a 'unity in diversity' that, while including a community element, restricts integration to mere cooperation through the strict respect of the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. It therefore suffers from a constant tension between these two elements which enables the second discourse on the 'securitisation of integration' – promoting a deeper scope of integration – to challenge it, in particular within Mercosur.

Beyond this competition between two regional official discourses, the encounter between Brazil and a range of 'external' actors also appears more complex. The analysis of Brazil, the EU and the US/OAS discourses point to an important divergence in their representation of the region and security. While Brazil sees regional cooperation as potentially supporting its national development project, it sees a deeper institutionalisation of Mercosur and Unasur as a threat to its sovereignty, and its self-representation as a nation 'in-building' with global ambitions. Complete autonomy and independence are presented as essential to reach its full potential. Hence, to preserve its sovereignty, it clearly differentiates defence from security –

security concerning internal issues and therefore mainly requiring national answers, whereas defence, equated with the protection of the territorial integrity of Brazil, can allow for some regional cooperation (for instance to improve the Brazilian defence industry). The intertextual links between this dominant Brazilian discourse and the 'unity in diversity' regional discourse clearly shows how the former constitute the latter. The discourse of the EU, promoting the agency of a more institutionalised Mercosur and, together with the US, fostering a comprehensive concept of security merging security and defence is thus perceived as a clear threat by Brazil. Indeed, it is seen as potentially opening the way for the intervention of international actors in Amazonia, where most of Brazil's natural resources are located, under the pretext of the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism. Brazil thus opposes this comprehensive concept of security which securitises the 'new threats', fosters regional cooperation, and the use of the armed forces. Doing so, it hinders practices of foreign and security policies regionalisation.

However, some elements challenge the dominant Brazilian discourse: firstly, the exposure of Brazilian diplomats to the EU discourse at the moment of the creation of Mercosur and through its cooperation with the EU; and thus the need to legitimise the regional projects through the European concept of 'integration', which implies going beyond mere cooperation. Secondly, the socialisation of Brazilian representatives to the EU discourse on regions and security through the dialogue between the Parliament of the Mercosur and the European Parliament. Lastly, the dominant Brazilian discourse is challenged by the socialisation of its diplomatic officials and military officers to the comprehensive concept of security through their interaction with other armed forces and within the OAS. All these elements draw on the tensions already existent within the 'unity in diversity' discourse and contribute to constituting

the contesting 'securitisation of integration' discourse at the regional level (particularly at the Mercosur level). These tensions are thus exploited by other actors within Brazil (part of the Itamaraty and of the Ministry of Defence), and outside of Brazil (Parlasur, the US, the EU), to promote an alternative regional project.

The two competing regional official discourses frame very different types of practices. Indeed, the 'securitisation of integration' discourse fosters integration and regional action in the field of foreign, security and defence policies. It led in the 1990s, within the Mercosur framework, to the development of institutionalised regional practices to deal with transnational security issues and the interventions in Paraguay to preserve the democratic principle. However, this incipient agency of Mercosur was then diluted through the use of the South American framework (out of reach of the influence of external actors such as the US and the EU) as an umbrella for bilateral cooperation and restricting intervention to the strict respect of the sovereignty principle. Regionalisation took the form of the cohabitation of sovereign units cooperating according to their shifting interest – framed by the 'unity in diversity' discourse. However, other actors are trying to destabilise this dominant discourse and impose their own meaning on the region – which is the case of the US, the EU but also of other South American states in South America trying to challenge Brazil's dominant political project for the region. The intervention in Haiti, where Brazilian armed forces are exposed to new security practices, is already contributing to destabilise the separation between security and defence central to the dominant Brazilian discourse which hinders further regionalisation. It has already led to the contestation of this discourse within the Ministry of Defence and contributed to the deployment of the Brazilian armed forces at the Amazonian borders to deal with drug trafficking.

The theoretical framework elaborated in this doctoral thesis has made it possible to understand and clarify the regionalisation processes in West Africa and South America beyond the mainstream explanations of the IR literature on regional projects reviewed in chapter four. It has focused on the struggles between competing discourses stemming from ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of the regions and attempting to frame the regional identity to support their own political project for the region. Mainstream explanations, relying in general on an interest-based framework (NRA, RSC) and/or on an adaptation of the neofunctionalist spill over process (SC, RSC), are unable to provide an account of the different paths of the regionalisation process in the two regions. An interest-based approach cannot explain, for instance, why a regional power such as Nigeria would be willing to accept supranationality whereas another one, Brazil, refuses it; this in a context of a similar asymmetry of power (usually defined as material and ideational) with the other member states. Only an analysis of the representations of Nigeria – its sense of vulnerability that emerged after its civil war together with its conceptualisation of national/regional security, and its self-representation as a regional leader – can explain its adoption of the EU model of a supranational regional community. In the same way: why would Brazil hinder regional security cooperation while – an interest-based approach would argue²⁵¹ – transnational security issues such as drug trafficking and organised crime are major issues for the country? Indeed, the different answers to similar transnational security issues in the two regions illustrate the complexity of the regionalisation process. The empirical analysis evidenced that these answers are driven by the framing of transnational issues as national or regional in Brazil and Nigeria’s dominant representations. This comparison also confirms that the neo-functionalist spill over

²⁵¹ We saw in chapter four that the IR literature on regional projects in South America usually explains (and blames) the Brazilian government’s weak promotion of regional security initiatives by a lack of awareness of the ‘realities’ on the ground.

process is not self-sustaining – it can unfold but has to be supported by the relevant actors' discourses and practices, such as those of Nigeria and the EU in the case of West Africa. In South America, conversely, the emergence of institutionalised practices in the 1990s did not lead to any spill over which was blocked by Brazil's reluctance.

To conclude, it seems that the regionalisation process in West Africa will continue on its present deepening path. The framing of security issues as regional by the hegemonic discourse, the continuous involvement of international actors such as the EU but also the UN and increasingly the US, as well as the serious political and security issues faced by West Africa states, will likely continue fuelling regionalisation. The sustained spill over process leading to increased institutionalisation and the emergence of a regional normative order have for the moment defined the path of regionalisation in West Africa as the construction of a regional political community.

The situation is less certain in South America where the Brazilian discourse is dominant but challenged at every level (even inside Brazil). This is probably why the Brazilian government launched Unasur: as a way to institutionally anchor its regional project defined as the harmonious coexistence and cooperation between sovereign states. The key question is: is the Brazilian conceptualisation of security tenable in the context of increased interactions with neighbours and 'external' actors? It is unlikely to shift at the moment in the face of Brazil's deeply-rooted foreign policy traditions of autonomy and sovereignty. It will thus likely generate more and more tensions and lead to a rough coexistence and increased competition between the two discourses carrying alternative projects of regionalisation.

Insights on Regionalisation processes

Beyond showing the limitations of the IR literature and providing useful empirical conclusions on regionalisation in West Africa and South America, the comparison between the two regions enables the drawing of key insights on regionalisation in the field of foreign and security policies. These insights do not have the ambition to be of general application. This research considers regions as socially constructed and the product of complex historical processes, and therefore unique. However, the comparison highlighted some tendencies driving or conditioning the regionalisation process.

One of the main findings of this project was to show that regions are not independent units (which also makes the identification of similar trends possible): they are part of an international system where actors (re)produce discourses carrying certain norms, concepts and meanings such as ‘security’, ‘development’, ‘regional integration’ and so on. This was already noted in the introduction but then clearly shown in the body of this dissertation.

On the one hand, the analysis of the role of ‘external’ actors in the regionalisation process evidenced how they share a similar conception of security assimilated to a comprehensive concept merging security and defence, and highlighting the interconnectedness of threats and the interdependence of states. This concept is shared by actors as different as the EU and the US that use the same registers of speech with the same meaning, while promoting somehow different interests and political projects for the regions.

On the other hand, the concept of regional integration also has a specific meaning within this international discourse, framed by the European experience. This meaning articulates the concept of regional political community with the pooling of states’

sovereignty and the elaboration of common policies. The expectation is that states belonging to the same geographic region share enough similarities and have enough problems in common to take this step forward. This meaning is constantly and actively (re)produced by the EU through its interregional relations, as we saw with ECOWAS and Mercosur. However, the concept of regional integration is already imbued with this specific meaning without having to be promoted through the EU's discourses and practices. The case of South America is particularly illustrative in comparison to West Africa which adopted relatively straightforwardly this meaning. Indeed, the Brazilian dominant discourse is very much against it; either the pooling of sovereignties or the development of common policies. Nevertheless, this regional integration concept, framed by the EU experience, is constantly in the background and implicit (or explicit) in the Brazilian discourse through a constant justification that a regional community can exist between strictly sovereign states. Hence, Unasur's official discourse reiterates, within the 'unity in diversity' discourse, the proposal for a 'new model of integration'; but a new model compared to what? The implicit response would be: to the original defining model, which is the European Union. Indeed, the interviews showed clearly that Brazilian officials defined their regional projects in comparison to the EU.²⁵² At the same time, this background introduces tensions in the dominant discourse; tensions used by the contesting discourses at the Brazilian and regional level and which draw on the EU's model and concepts to propose further regionalisation (the discourse of Parlasur was particularly indicative of this trend).

Lastly, these different elements of the international community discourse are also shared and (re)produced by the IR literature on regional projects which participates to

²⁵² Noting also that the EU was taken as an explicit model for the creation of Mercosur.

the constitution of regionalisation processes. Chapter four showed how the IR literature produces a 'normative securitising discourse' – not acknowledged by scholars – which presents regional integration as the necessary and 'rational' move to deal with a range of security issues and ensure the economic development of regions. It has strong intertextual links with the discourses of the 'external' actors (the EU and the US) through its comprehensive concept of security and its emphasis on interdependence. The Regional Security Complex (RSC) approach became a nodal point widely referenced to with its concepts of security interdependence and securitisation that became key elements in the discourses of the relevant actors. In West Africa these concepts explicitly or implicitly underlie most of the discourses and practices of Nigeria, the EU and ECOWAS. In South America, significantly, the concept of securitisation entered the political discourse and is considered a threat to Brazil's sovereignty. Indeed, it is associated to this international discourse promoting the merging of security and defence, and increased regionalisation which is seen as part of the developed world's political project to undermine Brazil's autonomy and threaten its natural resources. There is thus, on Brazil's part, a constant accusation of the negative impact of 'securitisation' practices and an attempt to 'desecuritise' the 'new threats'. Their underlying economic and social aspects are instead emphasised to prove they are not actual security threats and do not require a military answer. Moreover, the Brazilian discourse also relies on a concept borrowed from another literature, the Security Community approach, to justify its new model of integration as a 'pluralistic security community' where sovereign states coexist in harmony and occasionally cooperate, without having to pool their sovereignty and develop common policy, in particular in the field of security. This concept underlies the Brazilian political project that seeks to reconcile community with sovereignty.

Another key insight from the empirical analysis in chapters six and seven concerns the conditions of assimilation of this international discourse carried and diffused by ‘external’ actors and the academic literature. The success or failure of its assimilation/adaptation depends on its encounter with the discourses and representations of regional actors, in particular the regional powers (Brazil and Nigeria). This supports the argument recently put forward by the literature on the EU’s normative power claiming that:

‘Europe’s ideational influence on regionalism can be fruitfully understood as the largely indirect process by which the EU experience travels to other regions through socialization and emulation. Nevertheless, as structural conditions vary across regions, EU ideational diffusion rarely leads to similar or even comparable institutional practices and outcomes’ (Lenz 2013, 212).²⁵³

The empirical study evidenced that the decisive element is how regional powers articulate the concept of region to their concept of nation/state: is it coherent and supportive, or is it incoherent and even threatening? This central articulation was already shown by Waeber (2002) in his analysis of Nordic states policies towards European integration. The two case studies of this dissertation further confirm that Waeber’s claim is also crucial in non-European contexts. Nigeria’s representation of the region as necessary for its security and development led to a full assimilation of the EU model in West Africa; whereas Brazil, in which security and development are represented as a purely national project requiring the full autonomy of the state, sees the region as supporting its national project but only to the extent that it does not undermine its autonomy and sovereignty – which is the case with the EU model of

²⁵³ However, Lenz’s (2013) emphasis on the structural conditions of each region leaves aside the agency of regional actors. Earlier works in the related IR literature on norm diffusion literature such as Acharya’s (2004, 244) norm localisation process assume, conversely, that local actors are the ones with the most important agency to pick and reconstitute international norms. However, the literature on norm diffusion by making the adoption or ‘localisation’ of norm their independent variable, tend to miss the political aspect of the struggle between actors. They focus either on ‘external’ actors such as ‘norm entrepreneurs’ or on local actors, instead of precisely focusing on the encounter.

integration. This articulation made in the most relevant member states of the regional organisations frame two dynamics of regionalisation, supranationalism and intergovernmentalism, driving the process of institutionalisation.

Hence, this articulation is more central to understanding the unfolding of the regionalisation of foreign and security policies in the two regions than the existence of a threatening Other: a claim often made by both the IR literature on regions (RSC, SC) and by the IR poststructuralist literature on foreign policy and security.²⁵⁴ Indeed, the empirical analysis indicates that Brazil's (and South America) threatening Other is more clearly defined with the image of the US, than in the case of Nigeria and West Africa which has largely dropped the defensive stance that was central in the earlier official discourse framing the creation of ECOWAS. In South America, the threat of the US is an important element of the dominant discourses on the regional projects and serves to justify the necessity to keep a united front against it and cooperate on some issues of common interest, but not to develop common policies. Nevertheless, this does not mean that security does not matter in the regionalisation process; the conceptualisation of security held by the relevant actors is actually crucial. The regionalisation of foreign and security policies, whether it takes the path of a regional community in the case of West Africa or takes the form of a coexistence of sovereign states as in South America, depends to a great extent on the dominant meaning attributed to security: is security seen as an internal/external security continuum²⁵⁵ or as separated between an internal dimension (security) and an external one (defence). The continuum justifies the shift to a regional political community as it

²⁵⁴ The poststructuralist literature does not look at regions but at states. However, its classical argument that the identity of a state is (re)produced through its foreign policy opposing a Self to a threatening Other, could as well be applied to a regional political community which regional identity would be constructed through the definition of a significant Other (Campbell 1992; Walker 1993).

²⁵⁵ The literature on EU security governance showed how this internal/external security continuum was at the basis of the EU's security practices. However, it did not show how they were also, because of this characteristic, region-building practices.

blurs the ‘inside’/‘outside’ borders maintained by states within the region; in the case of West Africa this blurring has led to the legitimate attribution of an agency to ECOWAS as a regional security actor with the right to intervene in, and monitor the security situation of a region unified by this continuum. It has legitimised the regional level as the necessary level of action. In South America, conversely, it has restricted security to a purely internal matter that should be dealt with by national policies and strategies; while the defence of the territorial integrity of the states could allow some degree of cooperation to reach this objective. Accordingly, neither agency nor legitimacy could be attributed to Mercosur and Unasur in the area of security.

Finally, these insights could be exploited in two ways. First this framework could be used to study the same process in other regions, such as Asian regions or other African regions, to analyse how the encounter between regional and ‘external actors’ constitute the regionalisation process; and, more particularly, the struggles around the concept of security. Secondly, a more detailed analysis of the interactions of the regional actors within the regional organisations should be provided to develop a more in-depth study of how the meaning of the region and security is ‘internally’ constituted. The Region-Building Approach has extensively done this type of analysis but usually taking intra-state or trans-states regions as its object of analysis. As for the study of inter-state regions, the RBA tends to only concern itself with European states. In IR, for instance, discursive approaches to European integration are starting to develop.²⁵⁶ A great more deal of investigation drawing on these kinds of approaches is thus needed to analyse regionalisation processes in developing regions.

²⁵⁶ See the special issue of *Cooperation and Conflict* on ‘Struggling over Meaning: Discourse Analysis and EU Foreign Policy’ (2014).

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